THE TWO SPIES

NATHAN HALE *and* ROBERT TOWNSEND

The ingenious spy system established and maintained in New York City by General Washington is, for the first time, revealed in this volume, together with new facts regarding Nathan Hale and Major André.

BY MORTON PENNYPACKER

Presentation Copy

THE TWO SPIES

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NATHAN HALE AND
ROBERT TOWNSEND

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Nathan Hale

Artistic replica of the statue at the Wadsworth Athenæum
Hartford, Connecticut

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NATHAN HALE *and* ROBERT TOWNSEND

BY MORTON PENNYPACKER

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
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PREFATORY NOTE

IT IS *nearly one hundred and ten years since America's first great novel was written, it being James Fenimore Cooper's second book. With 'The Spy' for title, it was hailed with unprecedented enthusiasm. There can be no question but what Governor John Jay's recital of the work of the spies made a deep impression upon Cooper, but years passed before he attempted to record it permanently. Meanwhile, he had many opportunities to converse with others who were more intimately connected with the Secret Service work than he ever realized. Elizabeth Floyd was his mother-in-law, and the visits to members of her family on Long Island were frequent. Two years preceding the publication of 'The Spy,' he became temporarily a resident of Sag Harbor, although still retaining his home in Westchester County. It is not, therefore, surprising to discover that so much that he has placed in Westchester County actually happened on Long Island.*

To Cooper 'The Spy' must have been a disappointment, particularly after Enoch Crosby had been exploited. Crosby did not conform to his ideal, but the spies of Washington did. When Tallmadge wished to send Long Island assistance in October, 1780, Townsend's reply, as will be found in these pages, was, 'I do not choose that the person you mention, or any other of his character, should call on me.' When Abra-

ham Woodhull discovered our country's need for ready money, he used his own for incidental expenses of the Secret Service, such as repairs to their four whaleboats and feed for the horses, and never complained, although more than seven years of peace passed before our government reimbursed him. It is inspiring to a greater patriotism to discover the type of men that these pages reveal.

The story of Nathan Hale will commend itself for brevity. No statements at the present day known to be incorrect are even quoted therein. The hitherto unpublished statement regarding his capture is on the authority of Robert Townsend, whom General Washington says he found always reliable. This might have been known seventy years ago had not Henry Onderdonk added confusing details that discredited it.

An elaborate chapter was in preparation detailing the scientifically planned investigation that made certain the identity of Robert Townsend as the 'Culper Junior' of the American Revolution, when it was observed that the material collected and here published evinced that beyond comment. Therefore, no documents are here offered to prove what obviously is a fact.

Many startling revelations will be discovered by the careful reader of these pages. Some of them will be observed only after referring to the secret code printed among the Notes. The return of Major André after he had been started on his way to freedom is timely as well as interesting, for we are this fall celebrating the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of his execution. A strange hesitancy to-day, as during the life of Major Tallmadge, may necessitate patient waiting for more

intimate details that will be merely stronger confirmation of this interesting fact.

Where letters from either of the Culpers have been condensed for the sake of brevity, a figure within parentheses has been used to indicate that the same letter will be found in its entirety among the Notes beginning on page 85. A more perfect analysis is thus assured to the student of history.

Acknowledgment is due for assistance to so many, particularly among the heads of the larger public libraries and historical societies, that it becomes impracticable to name them individually. They have shown a uniform enthusiasm and untiring effort that makes the present publication possible.

MORTON PENNYPACKER

Kew Gardens, L.I.
September, 1930

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THE TWO SPIES

NATHAN HALE

LATE IN the evening of September 22, 1776, Captain John Montressor, of the British Engineers, who was serving as aide-de-camp to Lord Howe, appeared under flag of truce at the American outposts on Harlem Plains, New York. He bore a letter to General Washington respecting the exchange of prisoners. General Putnam, Captain Alexander Hamilton, and Captain William Hull were among those who met him. To them Montressor verbally gave the information that an American officer, one Captain Hale, had been executed that morning as a spy. It was startling news, and to Hull it came like a shock, for Nathan Hale had been his chum at college* and confided to him details of the dangerous mission he had undertaken. A week later, the sad news reached the home of Hale, and one of his brothers, Enoch, started for the en-

* In the class of 1773 at Yale College among others were Nathan Hale and his brother Enoch, Benjamin Tallmadge, and William Townsend. William Hull was in the class of 1772.

campment of Washington's army. There Lieutenant-Colonel Webb was induced to visit the British headquarters under a flag, and he returned with information that enabled Enoch to record that 'Nathan, being suspected by his movements that he wanted to get out of New York, was taken up and examined by the general, and, some minutes being found with him, orders were immediately given that he should be hanged. When at the gallows, he spoke and told that he was a captain in the Continental army, by name Nathan Hale.'

Enoch carried this news home, and later his brother John made entry in the town records of Coventry which reads as follows: 'Capt. Nathan Hale, the son of Deacon Richard Hale, was taken in the City of New York by the Britons and Executed as a spie some time in the month of September, A.D. 1776.'

Tench Tilghman, in a letter to William Duer, written ten days after the announcement of Hale's execution, betrays the feeling in the American army. 'The General is determined, if he can bring some in his hands under the denomination of spies, to execute them,' he writes: 'General Howe hanged a Captain of ours belonging to Knowlton's Rangers who went into New York to make discoveries. I don't see why we should not make retaliation.'

Another letter, written by an American officer in camp at Harlem, is dated September 26, 1776, and reads: 'One Hale, in N.Y. on suspicion of being a spy, was taken up and dragged without ceremony to the Execution Post and hung up.' 'Yesterday we hanged an officer of the Provin-

cials who came as a spy,' writes a British officer to friends at home; and James Drewett, on board the British frigate Mercury at New York, writes: 'On the 22d we hung a man who was sent as spy by Gen. Washington.'

It was almost five months later when the newspapers began publishing garbled accounts. The 'Conquest of Canaan,' an epic poem, by Timothy Dwight, probably the first book to mention Hale, was not published until nearly nine years after his execution, although, strangely enough, its author had early in 1776 solicited Hale to get subscribers to it for him. The lines referring to Hale read:

> 'Thus, while fond Virtue wish'd in vain to save,
> Hale, bright and generous, found a hapless grave.
> With genius' living flame his bosom glow'd,
> And science charm'd him to her sweet abode:
> In worth's fair path his feet adventur'd far;
> The pride of peace, the rising grace of war;
> In duty firm, in danger calm as even,
> To friends unchanging, and sincere to heaven.
> How short his course, the prize how early won!
> While weeping friendship mourns her favourite gone.'

Hannah Adams was in fact the first historian to record a concise account of Hale, and her 'History of New England,' in which it appears, was not published until 1799, nearly twenty-three years after the event. The story in her book reads as follows:

'The retreat from Long Island left the British in full possession. What would be their future operations remained uncertain. To obtain information of their situa-

tion, their strength and future movements, was of high importance. For this purpose, general Washington applied to Colonel Knowlton, who commanded a regiment of light infantry, which formed the van of the American army, and desired him to adopt some mode of gaining the necessary information. Colonel Knowlton communicated this request to Captain Nathan Hale, of Connecticut, who was then a captain in his regiment.

'This young officer, animated by a sense of duty, and considering that an opportunity presented itself, by which he might be useful to his country, at once offered himself a volunteer for this hazardous service. He passed in disguise to Long Island, examined every part of the British army, and obtained the best possible information respecting their situation and future operations.

'In his attempt to return he was apprehended, carried before Sir William Howe, and the proof of his object was so clear, that he frankly acknowledged who he was, and what were his views.

'Sir William Howe at once gave an order to the provost marshal to execute him the next morning. This order was accordingly executed, in a most unfeeling manner, and by as great a savage as ever disgraced humanity. A clergyman, whose attendance was desired, was refused him; a bible for a few moments devotion was not procured, although he requested it. Letters, which, on the morning of his execution, he wrote to his mother * and other friends,

* Hale knew his mother was not living. It was an incorrect guess that one of the letters was for her.

were destroyed; and this very extraordinary reason given by the provost marshal, "that the rebels should not know they had a man in their army who could die with so much firmness."'

'Unknown to all around him, without a single friend to offer him the least consolation, thus fell as amiable and as worthy a young man as America could boast, with this as his dying observation, "that he only lamented, that he had but one life to lose for his country."... To see such a character, in the flower of youth, cheerfully treading in the most hazardous paths, influenced by the purest intentions, and only emulous to do good to his country, without the imputation of a crime, fall a victim to policy, must have been wounding to the feelings, even of his enemies. So far [1799] Hale has remained unnoticed, and, it is scarcely known such a character ever existed....'

Fifty years after Hale's execution the 'Long Island Star' published (April 2, 1827) extracts from a letter of Stephen Hempstead, Sen., aged sixty-nine, which Hempstead had published in the 'Missouri Republican.' Another ten years went by before the first printed address appeared, and thereafter memoirs and biographies followed at frequent intervals to the present time. Attempts have been made to trace every step in his career, but there is much that still puzzles the historians. Nobody has been able to prove how he got to New York, and no one can say positively where he was captured. From all that has been gathered on the subject, we have arrived at the following conclusions:

The retreat of the American army from Long Island had

been satisfactorily accomplished, but the officers found themselves in a most perilous condition when on September 7, 1776, Washington called a council of war to consider the important question: Should they defend or abandon New York? At another council on the 12th, it was decided to move to a position on Harlem Heights, leaving a guard of four thousand men under General Putnam in the city, with orders to follow if necessary. On the 14th, Washington made his headquarters at the house of Robert Murray, father of Lindley Murray the grammarian. From there he wrote to General Heath, then stationed at Kingsbridge:

'As everything, in a manner, depends upon obtaining intelligence of the enemy's motions, I do most earnestly entreat you and General Clinton to exert yourselves to accomplish this most desirable end. Leave no stone unturned, nor do not stick at expense, to bring this to pass, as I was never more uneasy than on account of my want of knowledge on this score....'

To quote a paragraph from Lossing: 'The vital questions pressing for answer were, Will they make a direct attack upon the city? Will they land upon the island, above the city, or at Morrisania beyond the Harlem River? Will they attempt to cut off our communications with the main, by seizing the region along the Harlem River or at Kingsbridge, by landing forces on the shores of the East and Hudson Rivers, at Turtle Bay, or at Bloomingdale, and, stretching a cordon of armed men from river to river, cut off the four thousand troops left in the city?'

Washington in his perplexity, called another council of

war at Murray's. He told his officers that he could not procure the least information concerning the intentions of the enemy, and again asked, What shall be done? It was resolved to send a competent person, in disguise, into the British camps on Long Island to unveil the momentous secret. It needed one skilled in military and scientific knowledge; a man possessed of a quick eye, a cool head, unflinching courage; tact, caution, and sagacity — a man on whose judgment and fidelity implicit reliance might be placed.

Washington sent for Lieutenant-Colonel Knowlton and asked him to find a man for the service. Knowlton summoned a number of officers to a conference at his quarters and after explaining the service required called for volunteers. Late in the conference, when it seemed he would not find a man competent and willing to undertake the perilous mission, 'a young officer appeared, pale from the effects of recent severe sickness. Knowlton repeated the invitation, when, almost immediately, the voice of the young soldier was heard uttering the momentous words, "I will undertake it!" It was the voice of Captain Nathan Hale.'

Everybody was astonished. The whole company knew Hale. They loved and admired him. After the meeting his friends tried to dissuade him from his decision, setting forth the risk of sacrificing all his good prospects in life and the fond hopes of his family and friends. Hull employed all the force of friendship and the arts of persuasion to bend him from his purpose, but in vain. With warmth and decision Hale said:

'I think I owe to my country the accomplishment of an object so important and so much desired by the commander of her armies, and I know no mode of obtaining the information but by assuming a disguise and passing into the enemy's camp. I am fully sensible of the consequences of discovery and capture in such a situation. But for a year I have been attached to the army, and have not rendered any material service, while receiving a compensation for which I make no return. Yet I am not influenced by any expectation of promotion or pecuniary reward. I wish to be useful; and every kind of service necessary for the public good becomes honorable by being necessary. If the exigencies of my country demand a peculiar service, its claims to the performance of that service are imperious.'

Knowlton presently conducted Hale to Washington, who delivered instructions concerning his mission. The commander also furnished him with a general order to the owners of all American vessels in Long Island Sound to convey him to any point on Long Island which he might designate.

Asher Wright, his trusty servant, was told to have the horses ready at the earliest moment, and, in company with Stephen Hempstead, they set off that Saturday evening. No hint has been given as to how they reached Norwalk, except that because of the British cruisers in the vicinity they could find no available boat until they got there, which may indicate that they spent a part of Sunday, hunting perhaps at Stamford and other points be-

tween there and Rye. Captain Pond, whom Hale knew, happened to be at Norwalk, then in command of the armed sloop Schuyler and arrangements were made to take him across to Huntington on the Long Island shore that night. Hempstead, who accompanied him this far, writing fifty years later, says that he changed his uniform for a plain suit of citizens' brown clothes, with a round broad-brimmed hat: He does not tell us whether he brought the extra suit with him, but we must presume that Captain Pond furnished it, although Hale charged Hempstead with the care of his army clothes, his commission and public and private papers, and also his silver shoe buckles, saying they would not comport with his character as a schoolmaster. He requested Hempstead to wait at Norwalk until he returned or was heard from.

It was near daylight Monday morning when Hale was landed on the beach at Huntington. No sound save the plash of the waves disturbed the quiet of the approaching day. No sign of human habitation was in sight: no guide-post to indicate the direction to the town; but there were hills not far away and from these a better view might be had. A path was discovered and he rightly surmised it led to the town. Who there entertained this martyr unawares we may never know. Nobody there wanted a teacher just at that time, but everybody was ready to tell him how the Whigs were crossing from Huntington every day in order to escape the British. Foraging parties had already been to Oyster Bay and other towns. Two hundred wagons had been demanded from the farmers of Suffolk County to

remove the baggage of the British from New Utrecht to Hellgate, and already three hundred had been sent there. Only the troops were allowed to cross the ferries from Long Island to New York without passes; but the market boats were still in service and doing a good business supplying the British troops with fresh country produce. Their difficulty was to get men to assist in loading and unloading.

We cannot think that Hale would fail to take advantage of this opportunity. Whilst the boats at Huntington were transporting passengers to Connecticut with their household effects, those from Oyster Bay were supplying the New York markets and now were making deliveries directly to the camp kitchens. Without loss of time, Hale must have followed the road from Huntington to Oyster Bay. There it was not necessary for him to diverge from the truth. He found Huntington was already well supplied with teachers, and being willing to work at anything was glad to assist on the market boats. They stopped at Whitestone Landing, at Flushing, and at Hellgate, and it was now his business to inquire how many troops were at each place, how many more were expected, and how long they would remain, and perhaps even where they expected to be the following week. Then, with what was left of the cargo, they crossed to New York and there found ready market.

We know that Nathan Hale upon arrival in the city found that many of the British had already crossed the river, had engaged the men of his own company among others, and were now fortifying their positions in various

sections of the city. And undoubtedly he mingled among them until, early on the morning of the 21st of September, the lower portion of the city was discovered to be in flames. We may never know how his time was occupied that day, but it is possible that in spite of his disguise he discovered he had been recognised as one of the officers attached to Washington's army. It may have startled him when he realized that he was back at the place he started from almost a week before. Back, but now not among friends. Washington had withdrawn and the British were now in possession of the ground between him and the American army. A walk of less than three miles along the shore of Harlem Creek would bring him within the American lines. It may have seemed the easiest way to return, and in fact might have been safely accomplished but for the unusual events of that day. The great curtain of smoke that hung over the city attracted attention for many miles around. Among those who went out of their way to obtain details of its cause was Captain Quarme and the crew of the Halifax. They were off Whitestone Point at the time, but when they had neared Manhattan in the vicinity of Ward's Island, Quarme, with a few men, went ashore near what is now One Hundred and Eleventh Street. Hale was just reaching the water-front at that point, and noticing the small boat, and the Halifax not being in sight as the trees on Ward's Island hid the view, concluded it might be a friendly party from Long Island. He had betrayed his anxiety and attracted suspicion before he realized his mistake. By Captain Quarme's order he

was left with the sentinels at the British outposts, who later conducted him to headquarters, and when his men returned they rowed for the Halifax and sailed back to anchorage that night in the vicinity of City Island. Later in the war the Halifax was stationed at Huntington, which may account for the idea that Hale was captured there.

The documents previously quoted show his treatment after reaching the British lines.

ROBERT TOWNSEND

THE capture and execution of Nathan Hale made a failure of the attempt to get instant information from within the British lines; but it formed a determination in the General's mind to establish a Secret Service Bureau that would be more carefully planned and consequently less liable to disappointing results. The man selected to manage the spy system within the city of New York was Robert Townsend, of Oyster Bay, Long Island. Without discovery he furnished General Washington with correct information throughout the war, and at its close, lest harm should come to him, the General determined that his identity should never be revealed. His books, which remained sealed for over a century, now permit positive identification.[1]

Before the war began, Robert Townsend acted as purchasing agent for his father, in importing flax and sugar and molasses, tea and coffee and iron and rum and similar commodities,[2] and there is a suggestion that he may have collected a secret fund for the 'Sons of Liberty' in 1772,

'73, and '74. His first war work commenced when the Provincial Convention resolved unanimously on August 24, 1776, 'That Robert Townsend be a commissary to supply Brigadier-General Woodhull's Brigade with provisions'; but it may have been abruptly ended with the capture of Woodhull and the scattering of his men.(3) Among the men of the Provincial Congress who voted for him as commissary to Nathaniel Woodhull was John Morin Scott, now a general himself under Washington. Scott had the confidence of the Commander-in-Chief and it was proposed that he should establish this Secret Service Bureau. His plans were progressing satisfactorily when a greater work for the State * called him from the federal service, but before leaving, he had made advances toward interesting Townsend in the work.

Upon receipt of Scott's resignation, General Washington called Major Benjamin Tallmadge, of the Second Regiment, Light Dragoons, to the service. Tallmadge was a native of Long Island, born at Brookhaven in Suffolk County on February 25, 1754; and it was, therefore, natural for him to expect to find there those in whom he could place the greatest confidence. In this he was not disappointed. Men there were already anxious to be serviceable to their country's cause in any capacity. Abraham Woodhull, Caleb Brewster, Austin Roe, and Nathaniel Ruggles were among the leaders. So important was their work that without them little from New York

*In 1777 John Morin Scott was appointed Secretary of the State of New York.

Your humble servant
Robert Townsend

City could have reached the General. Abraham Woodhull in particular was a man whom history should accord a prominent place.

Until missing letters are discovered, the exact date when the service of systematically transmitting intelligence commenced cannot be ascertained. In his 'Memoir,' Colonel Tallmadge merely records:

'This year [1778] I opened a private correspondence with some persons in New York [for Gen. Washington] which lasted through the war. How beneficial it was to the Commander-in-Chief is evidenced by his continuing the same to the close of the war. I kept one or more boats constantly employed in crossing the Sound on this business.... My station was in the county of Westchester, and occasionally along the shores of the Sound.'

A letter from Major Tallmadge addressed to General Scott, dated Bedford, October 29, 1778, reads:

'I have this moment received a letter from a gentleman direct from Long Island, by the very gentleman whom I made mention to you the other day to serve as a conveyance for Samuel Culper's letters. I doubt not it is authentic.'

Samuel Culper was the name assumed by those who furnished the secret intelligence. At first without distinction, but later Abraham Woodhull signed 'Samuel Culper, Sr.,' and Robert Townsend, 'Samuel Culper, Jr.' Sometimes in error they would write 'Culper Samuel,' and Townsend sometimes forgot to add the 'Jr.'

Abraham Woodhull's letter of October 31, 1778, indi-

cates the hazard of the work in New York City, and mentions finding a faithful friend who will assist him. His letter reads:

'Since my last have explored Long Island, City of New York and island unto the ten mile stone to Tryons Quarters where I received his threats for comeing their that made me almost tremble knowing my situation and business but blessed be God have been prosperd and particularly successful in ingaging a faithful friend and one of the first characters in the City to make it his business and keep his eyes upon every movement and assist me in all respects and meet and consult weekly in or near the city. I have the most sanguine hopes of great advantage will acrue by his assistance.

'SAMUEL CULPER.'

Woodhull's next letter tells of another narrow escape from capture.[4] [5]Colonel Simcoe and his Rangers hastened to Setauket in April, 1779, upon information furnished by John Wolsey against him. Fortunately, he was with Townsend in New York at the time, but they fell upon his father and plundered him in a most shocking manner.*

Hardly was it thought possible that Woodhull would be able to pay the price of satisfaction. General Washington received the news from Major Tallmadge on June 26th,

* This, as related by John Jay and Robert Townsend to J. Fenimore Cooper, has been woven into fiction as the basis of the tenth chapter of *The Spy*.

at New Windsor, and the next day answered in a long letter with which he sent ten guineas for Culper, and mentioned one George Higday, who had attempted to get him information from New York. (6)

Meanwhile, Woodhull had arranged with Robert Townsend to engage actively in the service, and the first of his official letters to Major Tallmadge is dated June 29, 1779.(7) Woodhull's fifteenth letter, incorrectly dated June 31, 1779, explains its odd style as follows:

'Enclosed you have Mr. Saml. Culper Junr's letter, which is but short but hope it may be of some service. He hath wrote in the stile of Loyalty, I think through fear like me at first unaccustomed to the business and filled with fear but the longer one continues in the business if unsuspected of more real service can he be. I have appointed to see him on the 8th inst. and shall repeat again to him those instructions that I have received from time to time from you, and use my utmost endeavor to acquaint him with the I used to take and circumstances necessary to judge from, that a person unaccustomed would not readily conceive of. My greatest desire is that he may be useful and answer your most sanguine expectations. He wishes that the ink or stain might be forwarded. He hath hinted to you the prospect of their making excursions in to Connecticut very soon. Very probably the war will be carried on in that manner, as free liberty is granted to the Refugees to plunder as much as they can. You must keep a very good look out or your shores will be

destroyed. It is a pity that company could not be destroyed at Lloyd's Neck. Their refugee boats are continually coasting along and much endanger 40. They entirely disown the defeat of their troops in Carolina, and I confess I am not fully satisfied about it. Have not yet seen nor heard of its being published by authority. Just received the enclosed and the boat awaiting have not had time to write as I would. Please excuse hast and any imperfections you may discover, and am your humble servant,

'Samuel Culper.'

These letters, with those significant words, 'You must keep a very good lookout,' were on their way, but had not had time to reach Major Tallmadge when he was surprised by a night attack. Lord Rawdon, with nearly all of the British light horse, accompanied by a body of light infantry, had come upon them under cover of the darkness and compelled them to fight, principally with the broadsword, until Colonel Sheldon found it necessary to order their retreat. Tallmadge lost in the affray a fine horse, most of his field baggage, and the money and letters that General Washington had sent him for the Culpers. Upon receipt of this information at Headquarters, General Washington replied to Major Tallmadge on July 5th, as follows:

'*Sir:* I have just received your letter of the 3d. The loss of your papers was certainly a most unlucky accident and shows how dangerous it is to keep papers of any consequence at an advanced post. I beg you will take care to

guard against the like in future. If you will send me a trusty person I will replace the guineas.

'I observe yourself and other officers have lost some cloathing. Though I have not given an order of the kind before, yet in this particular exigence I am ready to give one on the Clothier to those officers who have been the sufferers for such articles as are absolutely necessary. You will be pleased to communicate this to Col. Sheldon and request him to send the Pay Master with a proper return to Head Quarters.

'The person who is most indangered by the acquisition of your letter is one Higday, who lives not far from the Bowery, on the Island of New York. I wish you could endeavour to give him the speediest notice of what has happened. My anxiety on his account is great. If he is really the man he has been represented to be, he will in all probability fall a sacrifice. I am, etc.'

Nine days later, Samuel Culper's seventeenth letter, dated July 9th, was forwarded to Major Tallmadge. He begins by saying it is a long time since he has heard from him and cannot tell if he wants him to continue the correspondence. He enthuses over Robert Townsend and says he has kept no secret from him. 'As soon as I can communicate to him your authority for my engaging him he will disengage himself from every other business, which at present affords him a handsome living.' He closes his letter with this N.B.: 'Culper, Jr. should now be furnished with some money. I gave him 4 half Joes on the 8th. instant.'

Meanwhile, General Washington had prepared instructions for the Culpers, a copy of which is still preserved among the papers of Colonel Tallmadge, as follows:

'INSTRUCTIONS

'C—— Junr. to remain in the City, to collect all the useful information he can — to do this he should mix as much as possible among the officers and Refugees, visit the Coffee Houses, and all public places. He is to pay particular attention to the movements by land and water in and about the city especially.

'How their transports are secured against attempt to destroy them — whether by armed vessels upon the flanks, or by chains, Booms, or any contrivances to keep off fire Rafts.

'The number of men destined for the defence of the City and Environs, endeavoring to designate the particular corps, and where each is posted.

'To be particular in describing the place where the works cross the Island in the Rear of the City — how many Redoubts are upon the line from River to River, how many Cannon in each, and of what weight and whether the Redoubts are closed or open next the city.

'Whether there are any Works upon the Island of New York between those near the City and the works at Fort Knyphausen or Washington, and if any, whereabouts and of what kind.

'To be very particular to find out whether any works

are thrown up on Harlem River, near Harlem Town, and whether Horn's Hook is fortifyed. If so, how many men are kept at each place, and what number and what sized Cannon are in those works.

'To enquire whether they have dug Pits within and in front of the lines and Works in general, three or four feet deep, in which sharp pointed stakes are fixed. These are intended to receive and wound men who attempt a surprise at night.

'The state of the provisions, Forage and Fuel to be attended to, as also the Health and Spirits of the Army, Navy and City.

'These are the principal matters to be observed within the Island and about the City of New York. Many more may occur to a person of C. Junr's penetration which he will note and communicate.

'C—— Senior's station to be upon Long Island to receive and transmit the intelligence of C—— Junior.

'As it is imagined that the only post of consequence which the enemy will attempt to hold upon Long Island in case of attack will be at Brooklyn, I would recommend that some inhabitant in the neighborhood of that place, and seemingly in the interest of the enemy, should be procured, who might probably gain daily admission into the Garrison by carrying on marketing, and from him intelligence might be gained every day or two of what was passing within, as the strength of the Garrison, the number and size of the Cannon, &c.

'Proper persons to be procured at convenient distances

along the Sound from Brooklyn to Newton whose business it shall be to observe and report what is passing upon the water, as whether any Vessels or Boats with troops are moving, their number and which way they seem bound.

'There can be scarcely any need of recommending the greatest Caution and secrecy in a Business so critical and dangerous. The following seem to be the best general rules:

'To intrust none but the persons fixed upon to transmit the Business.

'To deliver the dispatches to none upon our side but those who shall be pitched upon for the purpose of receiving them and to transmit them and any intelligence that may be obtained to no one but the Commander-in-Chief.'

Robert Townsend acknowledges receipt of the above instructions in his second letter, dated July 15th,[8] and in transmitting it Samuel Culper added the following;

'Mr. C. Junr. informed me at our interview that Christopher Duychenik, Sail Maker of 10, formerly Chairman of the Committee of Mechanics, is amongst you and is positively an agent for David Mathews, Mayor of 10, under the direction of Tryon he assisted Mathews, John Rome and others in affecting their escape. Mr. C. Jr. wishes for some of that Ink or Stain that he may paint out his character to you. Don't fail to forward it immediately, and when you receive the History of his conduct be very caucious how you handle it for if it should get to

the above mentioned persons ears C. Jr. tells me they would immediately suspect him. In the mean time I would advise and is approved on by Culper, Junr. Obtain the Mayor's signature and let a letter be wrote suitable for deception, and let it be handed him by some person of good address, praying his assistance to escape from the tyranny of Congress, which is the term used by the Mayor — or something like this plan I do not doubt will have the desired effect. John Rome is Secretary to M. Genl. Jones. It is not in my power to favour you with the Mayor's signature at present. I am your &c.

'Samuel Culper.'

General Washington forwarded the ink as requested, together with the following letter, dated West Point, July 25, 1779.

'*Sir:* All the white Ink I now have (indeed all that there is any prospect of getting soon) * is sent in phial No. 1 by

* James Jay, brother of John Jay, claims the credit of this invention. In a letter to Thomas Jefferson he says: 'The curious experiments in Sympathetic Inks, fluids with which if one writes on the whitest paper the letters immediately become invisible, are generally known; and so is likewise the facility with which the writing with any one of them may be rendered visible. For this reason I presume the subject has been considered as a matter of mere curiosity and entertainment, and has never been applied to any use in Politics or War. When the affairs of America, previous to the commencement of hostilities, began to wear a serious aspect, and threatened to issue in civil war, it occurred to me that a fluid might possibly be discovered for invisible writing, which would elude the generally known means of detection,

Col. Webb. The liquid in No. 2 is the counterpart which renders the other visible by wetting the paper with a fine brush after the first has been used and is dry. You will send these to C——r, Junr., as soon as possible, and I beg

and yet could be rendered visible by a suitable counterpart. Sensible of the great advantages, both in a political and military line, which we might derive from such a mode of procuring and transmitting intelligence, I set about the work. After innumerable experiments, I succeeded to my wish. From England I sent to my brother John in New York, considerable quantities of these preparations. He furnished Silas Deane with them when that gentleman first went to France. When Mr. Deane was in Paris, he writ to me in London, requesting further supplies of them, which I accordingly sent him. In the course of the war, General Washington was also furnished with them, and I have letters from him acknowledging their great utility, and requesting further supplies. Gordon in his history of the Revolution relates the fact, but without mentioning the author of the contrivance.

'By means of this mode of conveying intelligence, I transmitted to America the first authentic account which Congress received, of the determination of the British Ministry to reduce the Colonies to unconditional submission; the ministry at the time concealing this design, and holding out conciliatory measures. My method of communication was this: To prevent the suspicion which might arise were I to write to my brother John only, who was a member of Congress, I writ with black ink a short letter to him, and likewise to 1 or 2 other persons of the family, none exceeding 3 or 4 lines in black ink. The residue of the blank paper I filled up, invisibly, with such intelligence and matters as I thought would be useful to the American Cause. All these letters were left open, and sent in that condition to the Director or Secretary of the General Post Office, with a letter insinuating that I thought it could not be the intentions of Government, in their restraining laws, to put a stop to family intercourse; and therefore requesting the party to read over the letters, and if nothing improper

that no mention may ever be made of your having received such liquids from me or any one else. In all cases and at all times this procedure and circumspection is necessary, but it is indispensably so now as I am informed that Govr. Tryon has a preparation of the same acid or something similar to it, which may lead to a detection if it is ever known that a matter of this sort has passed from me.'

Meanwhile, Samuel Culper continued to advise Robert Townsend that he should give up his business in New York.* In a letter to Tallmadge, dated August 12th, he writes:[9]

'I do assure you he is a sincere friend and capable of rendering service to our country. And as such a one I have again most earnestly endeavoured, and begged him to disengage himself from all concerns that may interfere with the Public business he hath undertaken.'

Jonas Hawkins called for Townsend's fifth letter, but fearing capture destroyed it before reaching Woodhull. He advised Tallmadge of this in a letter, mostly in cipher, dated August 15th.[10] The sixth shared the same fate. Woodhull called for the next, which follows:

appeared in them, that he would permit them to pass in the mail to New York. They passed accordingly, and on their arrival in New York were sent into the American Lines. In this invisible writing I sent to Franklin and Deane, by the mail from London to Paris, a plan of the intended Expedition under Burgoyne from Canada.'

* Oakman & Townsend was the firm name, Henry Oakman being the partner at this time, supplying ships and the public with dry-goods and groceries.

No. 7.

LONG ISLAND, *Sept. 11th*, 1779.

'*Sir*, Your No. 11 & 12 have come to hand, the contents I duly note. I am very sorry that No. 5 was destroyed, tho' I can't say that it contained any intelligence that wou'd have been of material consequence — The bearer thought himself in danger. I believe it was merely imaginary. From timidity and the situation of affairs at that time, he did not choose to come to N.Yk; I therefore met him at a place quite out of danger on Long-Island. I then made an appointment for No. 6, at wch. time he came, I wrote it, and took it over the Ferry that he might run no hazard from the Inspector of Letters there. However he was so much intimidated that it shared the same fate as No. 5.

'I have now the pleasure of seeing our mutual friend Saml. Culper, Sen. who will run every hazard to forward this.

'I had informed you in No. 6, of the arrival of the British Fleet consisting of about 70 sail, under convoy of Adml. Arbuthnot in the Europa of 64 Guns & Russel of 74 Guns — The number of the Troops from the best information I can collect does not exceed 3000. They are all new troops, and in bad health, and are now encamped in and about Bedford; three miles from Brooklyn Ferry. The 44th. and 3 Hessian Regts. embarked a few days ago, and are to sail this day — Their destination said to be for Quebec — This is generally believed — Sir James Wallace in the Experiment sails sometime for Georgia, with one

Store Ship and two or three other vessels, but no Troops. No prospect of any other movement further than some vessels are fitting for Horses. The general opinion is that there will be no Campaign opened from N. York. The most knowing and judicious of the Torys think that some troops must be sent to the West Indies. They have now given up all hope of the second division so much talked of, as they think they will be wanted at home. Their spirits in general was much dejected with the accounts of a Spanish war, and Lord North's declaration that he had formed no alliances nor had any prospect of forming any. Their spirits are now in some measure elevated with the accounts of the destruction of the American Fleet at Penobscot. — I hope it will be but a temporary elevation. It certainly is a bad stroke, and I think it cou'd not be owing to want of inteligence of Sir Geo. Collier's sailing. A vessel arrived a few days ago from St. Kitts, but nothing transpires further than that the French had embarked 6000 Troops, with an intent, as is supposed, to take Antegua. The most judicious of the Tory's think that the Spaniards have by this invaded Jamaica, and make no doubt but that they will succeed. A fleet of 12 sail of victualers arrived yesterday from Cork — Another fleet was to sail in about four weeks after them, but they are not expected soon as its thought that the Spanish War will occasion a general embargo for some time, for the purpose of manning their fleet. The Guards, 54th, and two Hessian Regts. do duty in and about N.York. The Guards are in the City, 54th encamped at Greenwich, one Hessian Regt. Near Jones's

on Delancey's land, and the other near the water works. The number on Staten Island I do not know — On Long Island the new troops as mentioned, a Regt. of Horse about Flushing, a guard of about 30 men of the 3d. Battalian of Delancey's Brigade, with a party of the Militia Horse are at Jamaica, as a guard for the General. He might have been taken off with much ease sometime ago, but it would now be very difficult, and the Queens Rangers are at Oyster Bay. Their number is about 450, near 100 of which are mounted. The 3d. Batallian of Delancy's brigade are at Lloyd's Neck. From the vicinity of the Queens Rangers, who can be there by means of an alarm gun in two hours, I think it would by no means be advisable to attack them. They were alarmed on Thursday night last, and was there in one and a half hours after the alarm.

'My being unwell for a week past, and my engagement in business has prevented my obtaining a more particular account of the situation of the enemy. I intended to have disingaged myself from business agreeable to the solicitations of my friend Samuel Culper, Sen; but find it will be attended with more difficulty than I expected, owing to my having a partner, as I can make no excuse to do it. Untill I can, will continue to write as usual, and shall be less expensive.

'The Europa, Russel, Renown and four or five Frigates are now in port. It is thought by many that all the large ships on this station will be ordered to the West Indies to re-inforce Byron.

'The works at the Battery goes on very slow. The Hessians are repairing the Fort on Bunker hill, with some alterations. A very large Fort is building at Brooklyn on the west side of the road, and abt 80 rods due north from Cobble Hill. A large number of the Militia of Kings and Queens County are at work on it. The Militia of Suffolk have not as yet complyed. The orders, a copy of which you will have forwarded. I fear if they do not comply that devastation will attend that Loyal County. No late accounts from Georgia, the last were that their lines was more contracted. It is the general opinion that nothing more can be done there till they have re-inforcement which it is thought will be sent about the beginning of October. You may rest assured that I will use every endeavour to comply with your requests. I have made some overtures to a person to convey letters by a shorter route, and flatter myself that I shall succeed.

'I am, Sir, Your most obedt. Servt,

'Culper Jun.'

The General thought it was not necessary for Townsend to give up his business, and so replied from Headquarters at West Point, September 24, 1779:

'*Sir*, It is not my opinion that Culper Junior should be advised to give up his present employment. I would imagine that with a little industry he will be able to carry on his intelligence with greater security to himself and greater advantages to us, under cover of his usual busi-

ness, than if he were to dedicate himself wholly to the giving of information. It may afford him opportunities of collecting intelligence that he could not obtain so well in any other manner. It prevents also those suspicions which would become natural should he throw himself out of the line of his present employment. He may rest assured of every proper attention being paid to his services. One thing appears to me deserving of his particular consideration, as it will not only render his communications less exposed to detection, but relieve the fears of such persons as may be entrusted with its conveyance to the second link in the chain, and of course very much facilitate the object we have in view; I mean, that he should occasionally write his information on the blank leaves of a pamphlet, on the first, second, and other pages of a common pocket book, or on the blank leaves at each end of registers, almanacks, or any new publication or book of small value. He should be determined in the choice of these books principally by the goodness of the blank paper, as the ink is not easily legible unless it is on paper of a good quality. Having settled a plan of this kind with his friend, he may forward them without risk of search or the scrutiny of the enemy, as this is chiefly directed against paper made up in the form of letters.

'I would add a further hint on this subject. Even letters may be made more subservient to this communication, than they have yet been. He may write a familiar letter on domestic affairs, or on some little matters of business, to his friend at Setauket or elsewhere, interlining

with the stain his secret intelligence, or writing it on the opposite blank side of the letter. But that his friend may know how to distinguish these from letters addressed solely to himself, he may always leave such as contain secret information without date or place (dating it with the stain), or fold them up in a particular manner, which may be concerted between the parties. This last appears to be the best mark of the two, and may be the signal of their being designed for me. The first mentioned mode, however, or that of the books, appears to me the one least liable to detection. I am, &c.

'Go. Washington.'

SECRET SERVICE SECRETS

THE hazard of transmitting letters in the ordinary way between Headquarters and the Culpers continued to increase. It taxed the ingenuity of General Washington, as his preceding letter indicates; and Major Tallmadge carefully studied the subject. The first crude use of a few ciphers (ten for New York and twenty for Setauket) was no longer deemed sufficient. Early in July, 1779, Major Tallmadge prepared a pocket dictionary in which a new code was arranged. Probably copies were furnished the Culpers as well as Headquarters, but the only existing reference to it is in a letter from Washington dated July 27, 1779.* No exact copy of the code appears to have survived, but a fragmentary translation of it will be found among the Notes.(11)

In letters Major Tallmadge's name was never used on Long Island. He was always addressed as John Bolton. He had also a number, which was 721. Abraham Wood-

* See *Memoir of Colonel Benjamin Tallmadge*, p. 130.

Benj.n Tallmadge
LIEUTENANT COLONEL 1ST LIGHT DRAGOONS CONTINENTAL ARMY

hull was always addressed as Samuel Culper or Culper Senior, and was known by the number 722. Robert Townsend was Culper Junior, and his number was 723. Austin Roe * 724, Caleb Brewster 725, George Washington 711, New York 727, Long Island 728, Setauket 729, etc.

The stain letters were doubtless the most clever, but only fragments of them have survived. However, copies of those that reached Headquarters were made by Alexander Hamilton and other trusted members of the General's official family, and these are still preserved among the Washington Papers. Sometimes they reached the General in a manner that alarmed him, as the following extract shows:

'C——r, Jr. should avoid making use of the Stain upon a Blank sheet of paper (which is the usual way of its coming to me). This circumstance alone is sufficient to raise suspicions. A much better way is to write a letter in the

* It was this Austin Roe who fell from his horse and broke his leg while hurrying to keep an engagement with George Washington in 1790. The President was then touring Long Island and, probably without disclosing his reason to any one, requested the presence of those who had faithfully served him during the Revolution. Austin Roe had long occupied the Setauket homestead, later known as the Dering property, but now owned by the Irwins. His brother, Captain Daniel Roe, was at the time occupying the Roe homestead at Port Jefferson, then called the Townsend house. Captain Nathaniel Roe was a cousin, not in the neighborhood at the time. Austin 'bore the title of Captain,' his biographer says, but few knew what he commanded.

Tory stile with some mixture of family matters and between the lines and on the remaining part of the sheet communicate with the stain the intended intelligence. Such a letter would pass through the hands of the enemy unsuspected and even if the agents should be unfaithful or negligent, no discovery would be made to his prejudice, as these people are not to know that there is concealed writing in the letter and the intelligent part of it would be an evidence in its favor.'

Probably Major Tallmadge had not explained that Townsend's method was to conceal the sheet by forwarding with it to him an entire quire of the same folded letter-paper, in which there was no way of discovering this particular sheet except by knowing its position in the quire.

It was such a letter from Townsend that Culper Senior mentions in his of September 19th.[12] He also relates how it became necessary for him to expose himself in order to protect Brewster, who with his boat was waiting for it. Culper Junior's tenth letter is dated October 9th.[13] In it he says:

'A considerable number of Troops are on the West end of Long Island. The 17th Dragoons at Hemstead, the mounted Legion and Queens Rangers at Jericho, and the Foot belonging to the Legion are at Oyster Bay. No arrivals of any consequence since my last, except those mentioned. The spirits of the troops flag much, but still some flatter themselves that there is yet a probability of England rising superior to all her enemies. There does

not appear the least prospect of this place being vacated this fall, tho I believe they would be glad to have them at home.'

With this Samuel Culper encloses his twenty-fifth letter, in which he relates how he was captured and escaped, as follows:

'Inclosed you have S. C. Junrs. letter, which wish safe to hand. He desired me to send for some more of that Stain. It is too great a risque to write with ink in this country of robbers. I this day just saved my life. Soon after I left Hempstead Plains and got into the woods I was attacked by four armed men, one of them I had frequently seen in N.York. They searched every pocket and lining of my clothes, shoes, and also my saddle, which the enclosed was in, but thank kind Providence they did not find it. I had but one dollar in money about me. It was so little they did not take it, and so came off clear. Don't mention this for I keep it a secret for fear it should intimidate all concerned here — and am Yours Sincerely,

'Saml. Culper.'

Culper Senior's next letter,[14] dated October 26th, he also, incorrectly numbers 25. Townsend's next letter,[15] written with the stain, is dated October 29th, as is also the following from Culper Senior:

'Your No. 19 with the inclosed came to hand on the 26th, and have noted the contents and shall follow your

directions as far as in me lay, and to compleat the same have desired an interview with Culper Jnr. which if by the movement of your army it should become necessary that the present rout of dispatches should be shortened must principally depend on his acquaintance. If any secrets are with you, and may tend to the common good by communicating them to us, and enable us to better judge and assist your measures, don't fail to do it. I sincerely declare to you by all that is valuable and sacred that no person but him and me shall know it — depend nothing shall be wanting on my part to forward intelligence to you as frequent as possible. And forget not to urge 725 to his duty, which I must say he hath lately neglected. Mr. Jackson perfectly knows it. And he frequently objects to coming so often.

'I most impatiently wait the arrival of the Count DeEstang, and your operations, and as the season is so far advanced, I greatly fear nothing will be done, but am not altogether without hopes.

'Since my last the sum of about £400. was subscribed in this town to be presented to General Clinton in order to obtain his favour and evade the threatening storme — but before it could be possibly forwarded, a general demand for all our Oxen, or cattle of equal value, was sent. None escaped except some of our Tory gentry, and we have concluded since to keep our money and let them take and be damned. It is truely cutting to see the most notorious escape this demand, and the virtuous distressed. I conceive in my own mind, that their views in

taking the oxen and breaking up teams in general is through fear they may fall into your hands and be of service to your army. The enemy still continue to collect hay to the westward, without estimating it or giving receipts as heretofore, and are carrying it to Brooklyn Ferry and to Lloyd's Neck. Unless prevented they will soon be at this place.

'Night before last a most horrid robbery was committed on the houses of Coll. Benj. Floyd and Mr. Seton, by three whale boats from your shore, commanded by Joseph Hulce and Fade Danolson, and one other master of boat, name unknown to me. 725 can well inform you of their names. From the best judgment I can form they took to the value in money, household goods, Bonds and Notes, of Three Thousand Pounds. They left nothing in the houses that was portable. They even took their clock and all their looking glasses, and all Seal Gold Cloths, perhaps none before theirs in America.

'I cannot put up with such a wanton waste of property, I know they are enemy's to our cause, but yet their property should not go amongst such villians. I beg you would exert yourself and bring them to justice.'

Townsend's next letter, November 3d, announces that 'General Clinton and the Admiral were at Oyster Bay on Monday, observing the Harbour.' November 13th, Culper Senior sends a six page letter [16] in which he says:

'On the 10th I was to see Culper Junior, at a house he appointed twelve miles west from here, and set out with

all my letters to meet him, and just before I arrived at the appointed place I suddenly met a foraging party of 40 horse and 200 foot and about 100 wagons. Was much surprised but after answering a few questions passed them unmolested.

'But to my great mortification Culper Junior did not come that day. I waited all the next, and sent a person westward to several houses where I thought likely to find him, but could hear nothing of him. I am much concerned. Fear some accident hath befallen him, but yet wish to entertain a favorable thought that he may be sick. The wagons went from Smith Town yesterday loaded but am informed the troops all stayed behind waiting their return. We have 20 horse and 4 foot bilited about in houses, but no wagons have loaded here yet. They are exceedingly afraid and keep a very strict guard at the foot of Seaton's Neck. Coll. Floyd, E. Jones above the Mill. J. Thompson, P. Lions. John Bayles is Head Quarters. Main guard in Kelly's House. They are not expected to stay here more than 10 days, some say not longer than a week.. The inhabitants of this Island at present live a miserable life, which you may readily judge when having the refuge of three kingdoms and thirteen States amongst them, plundering and repine increaseth at no small rate. I am tired of this business, it gives me a deal of trouble, expecially when disappointment happens. Could not consent to be any longer an assistant if I was not almost an enthusiast for our success. I am perfectly acquainted with a full year's anxiety, which no one can scarcely have an idea of,

but those that experience. Not long since, there was not the breadth of your finger betwixt me and death. But so long as I reside here my faithful endeavours shall never be wanting.'

In his next letter,[17] written with the stain and dated November 27, 1779, Townsend mentions that the British have procured from Philadelphia 'several Reams of the paper made for the last emission struck by Congress.' 'I have taken much pains to find out some of those concerned, but could not accomplish it,' he adds.

Woodhull, in his letter of December 12th, encloses a blank [18] from Culper Junior. They are to be together on the 25th (Christmas Day):

'Hope if the weather is favorable you will incline to come over, as we greatly desire to see you. We would gladly if possible meet you half way. I have the pleasure to inform you my fears are much abated since the troops have been with us. Their approach was like death to me. Did not know wheather to stand or fall. Had they been the Queens Rangers or Legion should have been with you before now. Were I now in the State of New Jersey * without fear of Law or Gospel, would certainly kill Col. Simcoe, for his usage to me.

'SAML. CULPER.'

From Setauket, before he returned from his Christmas

* Colonel Simcoe had been captured and was at the time a prisoner in New Jersey.

meeting, Townsend wrote a long letter [19] to 'Mr. John Bolton' entirely undisguised. And soon one came from General Washington, in which he says:

MORRISTOWN, *5th Feby.* 1780.

'*Dr. Sir*, I have received two letters of yours from Wethersfield — one dated the 15th of Jan., the other without a date — By Colo. Blaine, who I expect will be the bearer of this, I send twenty guineas and a phial containing the stain and counterpart of the stain for C, Junr., which I wish may be got to him with as much safety and dispatch as the case will conveniently admit of. It is my further most earnest wish, that you would press him to open, if possible, a communication with me by a more direct route than the present. — His accounts are intelligent, clear, and satisfactory, consequently would be valuable, but owing to the circuitous rout through which they are transmitted I can derive no immediate or important advantage from them, and (as I rely upon his intelligence) the only satisfaction I derive from it, is, that other accts. are either confirmed or corrected by his, after they have been some time received.

'I am sensible of the delicacy of his situation, and the necessity of caution — for these reasons it is I have hitherto forborn and am yet unwilling to mention, persons to him as the vehicles of conveyance lest they should not prove so trustworthy and prudent as we could wish, but if he cannot form the first link of the chain of communication himself and will let me know it, I think I can name

one or two men to him who will receive and convey to me through others such intelligence as he may think important.'

Woodhull visited Townsend in New York toward the end of February. He was then probably trying to send his intelligence by the shorter route, as the next letter would indicate:

'32 729–215–for–1780

'*Sir*, Late last night I returned from 727, where I had the pleasure of seeing C. Junr. and many other good friends — I have nothing to enclose you from C. Junr. He assuring me that Coll. Ramsay and some other gentlemen that left 727 on Wednesday last on their way to Head Quarters, was furnished with all the intelligence that he could informe. Yet requested I would write to accompany the newspapers. On Saturday last a packet arrived with the Decr. Mail, and by private letters and all that we can understand, indicates a continuance of the war. The spirits of the enemy on the same account are very high. The Loyalist, formerly the Oliver Cromwell, is about to sail in search of Genl. Clinton. Hope they are all safely landed in the Eternal Regions. A few days agone, a ship arrived from Jamaica, but nothing can be learnt more than what is published. There's a large fleet with dry goods &c. daily expected from Europe, and a great number of Merchantmen from other quarters. Our prisoners on board of ships hath suffered much this winter, and to complete the total destruction of the sick, the hospital ship on

Thursday last about 4 o'clock took fire in the Stern, said by means of a stove, and was immediately consumed. How many perished I cannot say. Reports are from 3 to 50. There's a very great mortality amongst the enemies horses. There was no appearance of any movement that I could learn. I shall now mention the situation of several corps on Long Island and conclude. At Lloyd's Neck Coll. Ludlow's Regt. At Oyster Bay about 40 of German Huzzars. At Jericho the second Battallion of Skinner's Brigade. The 17th Dragoons at Hempstead. Coll. Fannings Regt. at Jamaica. Gover Browns at the head of the Fly near Flushing. 54th Regt. at Newtown. One Regt of Hessians at Bushwick. 725 handed me two phials and 20 guineas which shall be immediately transmitted to C. Junr. I could wish to serve you better but it not being in my power at this time. Am in great haste, Yours Sincerely,

'Saml. Culper.'

Another letter from Samuel Culper is dated March 13.[20] In a postscript to it he adds:

'I have just heard that the enemy hath made a demand from Smith Town of a thousand cords of wood and that all the wood lying near our harbor is to be cut for them — and two regts. is to be stationed in this Town. If it should take place it will I fear entirely ruin our correspondence. To prevent which I shall give you early intelligence of their motions from time to time, that you may be pre-

pared to give them a fatal blow at the beginning, or we shall be totally ruined. 725 must come on the 25th instant. I am yours Sincerely,

'S. CULPER.'

A missing letter evidently unjustly complained of Townsend, for one, dated from Setauket April 23d, reads:

'In my No. 2, informed you of the neglect of 723. (Then entirely ignorant of his informing of you previous to that he should continue no longer) and resolved to visit him on the 19th past, and returned this day after making every effort possible with his utter denial — and found yours of the 10th instant waiting, mentioning an interview of us three on the 1st of May, which if possible shall be compleat. As I shall see you soon I forbear stating his reasons and the probability of its being no great damage, and the hope that I have you shall not be neglected. I shall now give you what intelligence can be obtained at this time. A person formerly an inhabitant of Cavarick, came through you about 20 days ago from Canada, since which an embarcation of four thousand men reports say will most certainly take place for that quarter unless your movements prevent. The Troops that sailed from 727 some time gone and destined for the southward, have left all their heavy baggage behind and are directed to return as soon as the subjection of South Carolina is completed. A vessel arrived a few days ago from Jamaica, the captain is an acquaintance of Culper, Jr. and told him that

upwards of twenty sail of ships had been drove up on that Island and lost — that a Packet had arrived there left London the 12th of February, declaring that 25 sail of the Line, 150 Transports with 20 thousand on board had left Brest, their destination unknown. It is said with us that Washington hath pledged his honor to the army that a Naval force will be to their assistance by the 10th of June. Best judges say that their regular troops amount to no more than six thousand, and Militia and other vagabonds about 4 thousand, and only two or three small frigates. I am in past and at present much indisposed. Nothing more material to say. Hope to see you soon. I am &c.

'Saml. Culper.'

Following this came an order from Headquarters practically discharging the Culpers. It reads:

'Head Quarters, Morris Town, 19*th May*, 1780.

'*Dear Sir:* Your favr. of the 8th reached me a few days ago. As C. junior has totally declined and C. Senior seems to wish to do it, I think the intercourse may be dropped, more especially as from our present position the intelligence is so long getting to hand that it is of no use by the time it reaches me. I would however have you take an opportunity of informing the elder C. that we may have occasion for his services again in the course of the Summer, and that I shall be glad to employ him if it should become necessary and he is willing.

'I am endeavoring to open a communication with

New York across Staten Island, but who are the agents in the City, I do not know. I am &c.

'Go. Washington.'

Woodhull was not pleased with General Washington's letter, as his next to Major Tallmadge indicates:

June 10, 1780.

'*Sir.* Yours of the 5th inst, together with 711, was handed me yesterday, and have observed the contents. — The letter, agreeable to your directions, returned to the bearer. I am happy to find that 711 is about to establish a more advantageous channel of intelligence than heretofore. I perceive that the former he intimates hath been but of little service. Sorry we have been at so much cost and trouble for little or no purpose. He also mentions of my backwardness to serve. He certainly hath been misinformed. You are sensible I have been indefaticable, and have done it from a principal of duty rather than from any mercenary end — and as hinted heretofore, if at any time theres need you may rely on my faithful endeavours. I perceive there's no mention made of any money to discharge the remaining debts, which hath increased since I saw you, owing to your direction to continue the correspondence regular until I received your answer from 711. You speak with some assurance that the French is hourly expected to our assistance — hope they may not fail us — and that we may soon retrieve the sad misfortune of our Southern Garrison, which doleful fate the papers enclosed

doth too fully relate, to which I must you refer. The enemy last Tuesday night, with all the force they could muster, landed in the Jerseys, in order to surprise G. W. and had not returned on Friday night. It is thought much blood hath been spilt. A great number of wounded men hath been sent in together with General Sterling who had his thigh broke. No particulars had transpired on Friday night, but our friends are in hopes they will be defeated. Ther's a grand movement on foot in N.York. The troops are called from Lloyd's Neck and is said from every other distant post, and an embargo laid on all ships and small Sloops. It is suspected they are a going to quit N.York, or are going to make some diversion up the river, or are afraid of the French. But I cannot but think the former is likely to take place. For I believe their whole design is to the Southward. Thus sir, what I have written is from such authority as you have heretofore depended on, and from such as I call the best — and is all worthy of notice at this time. Hoping it may duly come to hand, and find you in health and prosperity is the earnest desire of your ever affectionate Friend and Hum^{l}. Serv^{t}.

'Samuel Culper.'

A few weeks' suspension was sufficient to convince Headquarters that the services of the Culpers were indispensable. Messengers were rushed to Major Tallmadge to re-engage them, as the next communication shows:

'HEAD QUARTERS, BERGEN COUNTY, 11*th July*, 1780.

'*Dear Sir.* As we may every moment expect the arrival of the French Fleet a revival of the correspondence with the Culpers will be of very great importance. If the younger cannot be engaged again, you will endeavor to prevail upon the older to give you information of the movements and position of the enemy upon Long Island — as whether they are all confined to the port at Brooklyn or whether they have any detached posts and where, and what is their strength at those posts — in short desire him to inform you of whatever comes under his notice and what seems worthy of communication. You will transmit your letters to Genl. Howe, who will forward them to me. I am, &c.

'GO. WASHINGTON.

'P.S. Desire him to attend particularly to the provision which they are making of wood and forage — and whether they drive in any stock.'

No time was lost upon receipt of this, as the letter of Samuel Culper to Major Tallmadge, dated Setauket, July 20th, shows:

'Your letter came to hand and found me very ill with a fever, and still continues. All that I could do was to send Austin Roe with directions, who returned this day in great haste with the enclosed dispatch from Culper Junior. Also assures me of the arrival of Admiral Graves with six ships of the line and is joined by three more out of New York,

also one of 50 and two of 40 guns and has sailed for Rhode Island and is supposed they will be there before this can possibly reach you. Also 8000 Troops are this day embarking at Whitestone for the before mentioned port. I am told for certain that the French have only seven sail of the line. I greatly fear their destination. We hourly expect a number of the enemy in this quarter, for what end I know not. You must excuse all imperfections at this time on the account of my before mentioned fever. Nevertheless you have perhaps all the needful — and pray for your success and exercions. And am yours sincerely,

'Saml. Culper.'

Another letter followed on August 6th, as follows:

'*Sir*, Your several dates of the 23d and 26th of July came to hand on the 4th inst, and observe the contents. Being still in a feble state — but mending — was obliged again to have recourse to Austin Roe, and dispatched him the same evening with such directions as thought proper. He this instant returned with the enclosed from Culper, Junior. I hope it contains all the needful. Roe hath no verbal account worthy of notice. Also you have enclosed the state of the Garrison at Lloyds Neck, but it is not satisfactory to me, but is the best that could be procured this time. Coll. Simcoe with his regiment of Rangers, and three companies of Queens County Militia Foot, and about thirty of Coll. Ludlow's Regiment, have been for some time past in the County, the main body at South-

ampton, some at the River Head, some at South Mills, about 30 at Coram. What they have come down here for is unknown.

'I purpose to go to 727 for the benefit of our 115, and have 130 ready for you, em. Also have the promise of the exact state of Lloyd's Neck, which shall then transmit. Am in great haste and in the interval am Your Sincerely,

'Saml. Culper.'

An interesting letter followed his visit to New York, which is dated August 16, 1780, and reads as follows:

'*Sir*, I have this day returned from New York and am happy to inform you that Culper Junior hath engaged to serve as heretofore. I have nothing to enclose from him to you, as there's not a word of intelligence worthy of notice in New York. I have the satisfaction to assure you that the judicious Torys in New York are more dejected now than ever I knew before, on account of the neutrality entered into by the Powers of Europe. A few victualling ships were to sail yesterday to the fleet now laying in Gardiner's Bay. Clinton, with about 7000 men are cantoned from Whitestone to Jamaica for this ten days past have been ordered to hold themselves in readiness together with the fleet that still lays at Whitestone. Common reports say they are about to proceed to Rhode Island, but it is very uncertain. No person can tell, but, by all means be upon your guard. There is in this county the Queens Rangers, three companies of Queens County

Militia Troop, Coll. Fanning's Regiment, the 17th Dragoons, German Huzzars, all marching to the Eastward, also three Regiments more were ordered to march recently. Say they are to embark at the east end of this Island. We have a report that the second division of French hath arrived. Hope it may be true. Tryon, Patterson and Mathews are about to sail immediately in the packet for Europe. The person I depended upon to procure a very accurate account of Lloyd's Neck, is taken very ill and hath put it out of my power to forward it now. I have ordered 725 to return here again on the f i instant, and intend to send you as frequent dispatches as possible as long as (illegible) In the interim wishing you health and prosperity I am &c.

'S. CULPER.

'N.B. Next opportunity you'll have the papers regular as heretofore. Should have sent them now but lost them out of my pocket on the road.

'I forgot to mention that General Clinton in person was escourted through this Town yesterday by the mounted Rangers, 17th Dragoons, and German Huzzars, in all about two hundred and forty horse.'

The Culpers were now using more care to conceal the intelligence in their letters, as will be observed upon examining Woodhull's, dated August 27th.[21] Townsend's were at this period all written with the stain. Tallmadge's efforts to shorten the line of communication have been preserved in a series of three of his letters to Head-

quarters. Incidentally, in his zeal he almost betrayed the identity of Culper Junior. The first letter, dated August 10, 1780, reads:

'Since I last saw your Excellency I have been endeavoring to open communications with New York by crossing over to Cow Neck to the westward of Oyster Bay. If this can be effected, Dispatches may be bro't from New York to the White Plains in 12 hours on contingencies, as the whole land course on both sides would not exceed 34 miles, & the Sound not more than 10 miles over, I am the more induced to this step, as C—— Junr. has a near Relation living near Cow Neck, whom if I can also engage, I am sure of C—— Junr's services.'

Tallmadge's next letter is dated from North Castle, August 20, 1780: and reads:

'*Sir.* Since my last I have made several attempts to open a communication with Culper, Junior, by the way of Oyster Bay or Cow Neck. The person whom I mentioned to Your Excellency as the properest man to engage and secure Culper's services, was away from home, at New York, and last Monday night I sent over an Officer who formerly resided at Oyster Bay, but the person in question was then too ill to be seen. I shall still pay attention to this matter, tho the Refugee boats which frequently pass up and down the Sound makes crossing very dangerous.

'Enclosed is a letter from the person who has for a long

time bro't dispatches from the Culpers. Your Excellency will perceive he has been attacked by some of the Refugee Boats. He requests more men, as may be seen by the enclosed. Your Excellency will please to direct me in the matter. There are several Continental Crews at Stamford and Horseneck, whose duty I am unacquainted with. Perhaps one of those can be spared.

'I am sorry Lt. B.——r was drove from L.I. so suddenly as Dispatches from Culper Junior were then waiting for him. I have the Honor to be Your Excellency's most Obedt. Servt.

'Benj. Tallmadge.'

In the next letter, dated from Bedford, August 28, 1780,[22] he says:

'After sending several times across the Sound to open a new communication with Culper Junior, without success, I have finally referred the whole matter to him, who I expect will appoint such place and pick on such persons for his confidential friends, as will best answer our purpose, and inform me thereof.'

TOWNSEND'S PERSONALITY

THERE is no good reason to question those who say that in the veins of Robert Townsend flowed the blood of Norman Conquerors. Upon his own immediate ancestors he could look with pardonable pride. The first on Long Island was John Townsend, one of the patentees of Flushing in 1645 and of Rustdorp as Jamaica, Long Island, was then called, in 1656.

Among John's children was John, usually called John 2d. He had, among others, a son James, whose son Jacob, born in 1692, was the father of Samuel Townsend and grandfather of Robert Townsend, whose *alias* was Culper Junior. Robert's father, Samuel, was born in 1717. He married Sarah, the daughter of William and Mary (Hicks) Stoddard. Mary's parents were John and Deborah (Almy) Hicks.

When Robert's father, Samuel Townsend, was in his twenty-fourth year, he was appointed by George Clarke, then Lieutenant-Governor and Commander-in-Chief of

the Province of New York, Ensign in the Company of Militia Foot in Queens County, Joseph Weeks then being Captain. His commission is dated December 15, 1741, and bears the signature of George Clarke, and also of the Deputy Secretary, George Moore.

Samuel Townsend is described in family documents as a fine old gentleman, of regular features, straight nose, a large blue eye, high forehead. A snuff-colored or gray suit, with silver knee- and shoe-buckles, a white stock of cambric lawn gathered in five plaits, fastened behind with a paste buckle, showing no collar, narrow ruffles at the shirt-bosom, gold-headed cane, and cocked hat. An uncle used to say he hated to see Sam and Sarah come into meeting, they looked so tall and proud. He was said to be a member of Meeting by birthright, his parents being strict Friends, and his wife, although baptized in the Episcopal Church, preferred the Friends. They had sons, Solomon, Samuel, Robert, William, and David, and daughters, Audrey, Sarah, and Phebe.

Solomon was seven years older than his brother Robert. Much has already been published about him. He married Anne, daughter of Peter Townsend of Orange County, New York, and they had eight children:[23] Hannah, Anne, Mary, Phebe, Samuel, Jacob, Peter, and Solomon.

Robert Townsend, *alias* Culper Junior, was born November 25, 1753, and died at Oyster Bay, Long Island, March 7, 1838, aged eighty-four years, three months, and ten days.

Robert Townsend's father, Samuel, was always a suc-

cessful merchant. He conducted his business at Jericho, Long Island, until 1743, after which he moved to the property now known as 'Raynham Hall' at Oyster Bay, which he had purchased in 1740. Himself a learned man, he was always careful to see that the education of his children was not neglected. Pride radiates in the handwriting still preserved on a page of his ledger, where he records:

'Sarah Townsend went to school to Rebeccah Coles ye 27th of October, 1766. Rebecca Coles School ceased ye last of February, 1767. Sarah and Phebe Townsend bagan school with John Townsend's wife ye 16th March, 1767.'

The ages of the girls at that time were five and seven years.

At the commencement of hostilities, Samuel Townsend was slow in renouncing his allegiance to the King. A former experience was probably responsible for this caution. When in 1758 he had attempted to get justice for the neutral French and prisoners of war that had been brought into Kings County in 1756, he was held in the custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms of the General Assembly of New York for several days and was then not released until they had passed a Resolve, that 'the said Samuel Townsend, for writing and sending the said Letter, is guilty of a high misdemeanor and most daring Insult on the Honour, Justice and Authority of this House,' and he was further required to pay a heavy fine and promise that for the future he would be more cautious to avoid every occasion of exposing himself to their censure or reproof.

There was another Samuel Townsend in Oyster Bay active for the Crown as early as December, 1774, 'who proposed to convince the world that his Majesty is not without friends here who will support his government.' Later he joined the American army and if British Headquarters confused the two men, they did no more than some of the biographers have done. Upon capture he was severely punished by the British in the Provost, New York, while for Samuel of Raynham Hall most of them had great respect.*

* There is but a single recorded instance when Samuel was treated roughly by the British. It was written for posterity in 1876 by Solomon Townsend, his grandson, who was a nephew of Robert Townsend, and is as follows:

'I am induced to pen these lines that the record of the arrest of Saml. Townsend may be transmitted to another centennial as faithfully as is possible under the light of the testimony of those who were eye witnesses of the scene — and from whose lips the narrator heard it.

'On a bright September afternoon in the year 1776, a troop of horse whose helmets were just before seen reflected in the sun's rays as they galloped down South Street wheeled up in front of the house of Jacob Townsend — whose daughter Thomas Buchanan had wedded — and enquired for Saml. Townsend. They were directed to the next house, upon the piazza of which that gentleman was seated.

'He had been 30 years a Magistrate, and then a Member of the Colonial Assembly and was then one of the Provincial Congress, Committee of Safety, and of the Convention that was deliberating upon the first Constitution of this State — that of 1777 — wherein the mind of John Jay, and other distinguished Statesmen, was said to have outlined the Constitution of the United States as inaugurated at Philadelphia a dozen years later.

'The subaltern in command — asked whether "Sam" Townsend was home and the reply being "I am the man," with great discourtesy

Samuel Townsend began active service in the Provincial Congress on May 24, 1775, and usually was present in the

— accompanied with an oath, directed him to get himself ready to accompany them to the Provost (the Prison Ships, &c.) at New York. Mr. T. hoped they would wait till he had time to send a servant to an outlot for a saddle horse, a request that was rudely yielded with another blasphemous expression.

'During this brief delay — the young upstart strutted over the Hall, taking from one of the mantles a fowling piece and shattering it, denying the right of a rebel to have in possession even such a weapon. In the parlor the Portrait of Capt. Solomon Townsend — taken in Portugal in 1772 — when in command of one of Mr. Buchanan's ships — the Glasgow — attracted the young martinet's attention, and he expressed his regret that it was not in his power to wreak the vengeance of his superiors upon him also.

'Whilst these scenes were enacting within doors, and Mr. Townsend's wife and his young daughters — Sarah and Phebe, were almost frantic at the rudeness exhibited towards the venerated husband and parent — the neighbors collected in front and when the agony of the family was witnessed, their sympathy even to tears was excited, Tories as most of them were in their political affiliations. My authority — outside the family for this incident (Miss Elizabeth Wooden, deceased some 20 years), and whose family took the Tory side — said that altho' among the crowd of neighbors were some of the instigators of the arrest — they claimed that Mr. Townsend was not regarding his pledged word to remain neutral — when they witnessed their really loved and respected neighbor torn from his family under such painful circumstances, openly regretted that their political animosity had contributed to produce so sad a scene.

'Provided with only a change of clothing, Mr. T. was soon taken by the Troop on their way to the superior officer whose quarters were then in the vicinity of Jericho. On ascending the hill at the southern terminus of "Pinehollow" — then and long afterwards known as the "Great Hill," Mr. and Mrs. Buchanan in their Phaeton and Miss Audrey, Mr. Townsend's eldest daughter met them — Mr. Buchanan

sessions to July 1st. Toward the end of July, he again took his seat and toward the close of May, 1776, he became active. He was with them at White Plains from July 9th to August, and during August attended the Provincial Convention and was also one of the Committee of Safety. But he did not follow them to Fishkill, where they began meeting on September 5, 1776. He, therefore, although elected a member of the committee to draft the first State Constitution, was not able actively to participate in their

at once enquired into the surprising circumstances, and taking the saddle horse of Miss Townsend — sent the ladies home, whilst he accompanied the cavalcade on the route. Arrived at the quarters of the superior officer he became responsible to the extent of several thousand pounds, that the prisoners should be produced upon a notice of six hours.

'The two gentlemen then returned to their homes reaching the village at a late hour of the evening and thus allaying the alarm and distress of their families.

'To illustrate how even the gentler members of the family were made to feel the rudeness, or as Colonel Simcoe afterwards wrote in his Valentine to one of them, "the Iron Spear of War," when the Troopers noticed that Miss Townsend rode a fine animal — they insultingly enquired of her how she dared to appear thus, without the Tory badge or escutcheon upon its ear — she replied, she preferred riding her own petted filly as it was.

'The kindness of Mr. Buchanan was returned to him by the continuance of business prosperity, and finally when a boat lay at the foot of Wall St. with all his moveable worldly goods ready to take his family to Nova Scotia — and the property of those of his own political associates was being daily confiscated or attached by the New York Legislature, then in session at the head of Wall St., none rose to move the seizure of that of the noble hearted merchant, Thomas Buchanan, Tory, as he might be called.'

deliberations, and choosing to remain at home was obliged to subscribe to the Oath of Allegiance to the King.*

His appointment on committees to advise with and assist Brigadier-General Woodhull in protecting the stock was an important service, as the letters still preserved show. One, dated July 12, 1776, emphasizes this:†

The Provincial Convention on August 24th unani-

* After the date below Samuel Townsend carried an Oath of Allegiance, in form as follows:

Certificate from Judge Hicks

This is to certify that Samuel Townsend hath submitted to government and taken the oath of allegiance to his Majesty King George this 10th Sept. 1776 before me.

WHITEHEAD HICKS,
One of the Judges of the Supr. Court.

† NEW YORK, *July* 12, 1776.

Gentlemen: — We have conferred with the General concerning the removal of stock back again to the pastures from whence they were driven; he was much chagrinned at the proposal and absolutely refused to consent, mentioning the unhappy consequences of not seasonably removing the stock from Staten Island. He is of opinion that all means should be used with the utmost expedition to remove the stock from Long Island, for which he promises to give all necessary assistance. We are of the same opinion, and hope your House will not lose a moment in giving peremptory orders concerning a matter of such vast importance. We are just informed by General Putnam, that one of Lord Howe's fleet arrived yesterday: the utmost dispatch is necessary. We need use no arguments: the affairs at Staten Island being fresh in your minds. We are gentlemen, your humble servants,

ABRM. KETALTAS,
SAML. TOWNSEND,
JOHN BROOM.

mously resolved, that Robert Townsend be a commissary to supply General Woodhull's Brigade with provisions till such time as General Washington shall give further orders for that purpose, and that Mr. William Smith and Mr. Samuel Townsend be a committee to wait on General Washington with a copy of these resolutions and submit the expediency and necessity of the same to his consideration and advice; also that they submit to His Excellency's consideration the propriety of ordering Colonel Smith's and Colonel Remsen's regiments of militia to join the said brigade.

On the 26th of August, Samuel Townsend and William Smith reported in the following words:

'Your committee, ordered to wait on General Washington with a request from this Convention that he would be pleased to order Col. Smith and Remsen's regiments, that are now in General Greene's lines at Brookland, into the western part of Queens county, to join General Woodhull, with that part of his brigade that has been lately ordered out from the western part of Suffolk and Queens counties by this Convention....That according to order they waited on His Excellency, and conferred with him on the subject above mentioned, and that he seemed well pleased, but he said he was afraid it was too late....General Washington appeared well satisfied with the proceedings of the Convention, and said that he should at all times, when he had it in his power, be ready to give them any assistance consistent with the public good; and that he would immediately give orders that Col. Smith's and

Remsen's regiments should march into Queens county to join General Woodhull....'

The Convention, upon receipt of the above report, addressed General Woodhull as follows:

'*Sir* — Yours of yesterday is just come to hand in answer to which we would inform you that Robert Townsend, the son of Samuel Townsend, Esqr. is appointed commissary for the troops under your command, of which we beg you will give him the earliest notice, and that we have made application to Genl. Washington for the regiments under the command of Cols. Smith and Remsen to join you; he assured our committee that he would issue out orders immediately for that purpose, and we expect that they are upon the spot by this time....'

General Woodhull replied to this in a letter addressed to the Honourable the Convention of the State of New York, at Harlem, which is as follows:

'Jamaica, *August*, 27, 1776.

'*Gentlemen*, I am now at Jamaica with less than one hundred men; having brought all the cattle from the westward southward of the hills, and have sent them off with the troops of horse, with orders to take all the rest eastward of this place to and eastward of Hempstead plains, and to put them into the fields, and set a guard over them. The enemy I am informed are intrenching from the heights near Howard's, southward. I have now received

yours, with several resolutions, which I wish was in my power to put in execution; but, unless Cols. Smith and Remsen, mentioned in yours, join me with their regiments, or some other assistance, immediately, I shall not be able; for the people are all moving east, and I cannot get any assistance from them. I shall continue here as long as I can, in hopes of a reinforcement; but if none comes soon, I shall retreat, and drive the stock before me, into the woods. Cols. Smith and Remsen I think can not join me. Unless you can send me some other assistance, I fear I shall soon be obliged to quit this place. I hope soon to hear from you. I am, gentlemen, Your most obedient humble servt.

'Nathl. Woodhull.'

James Townsend, uncle of Robert Townsend, who with John Sloss Hobart attempted to make a stand at Huntington, addressed a letter from there to the Provincial Congress on August 30th, which in part reads:

'*Gentlemen* — To our unspeakable mortification, we found when we arrived in Queens county, that the militia had dispersed, and General Woodhull had fallen into the hands of the enemy. We then proceeded with all despatch to this town as the only place where we could have any prospect of making an effectual stand, as the enemy were in full possession of the western parts of that county as far as Jamaica, and the disaffected from the east were gone in to them. Though we were not authorized for the purpose

by Convention, we have taken upon ourselves to order out the militia of the county to rendezvous here, and have wrote to Col. Mulford at East Hampton, to come up and take the command, as he is now the senior officer in the brigade.... We shall direct the commissary to furnish the militia with provisions....'

Only a few more days on Long Island remained for the faithful followers of Washington and the army. On September 16th, a lone individual passed the spot where Townsend and Hobart had attempted to make a stand only seventeen days before. It was Nathan Hale on his way to a glorified martyrdom.

SPIES AND SPIES

AS CULPER JUNIOR, the Spy, the most trying period in the career of Robert Townsend was now approaching. British officers had been quartered at his parents' home at Oyster Bay for the past four years. His sisters made life agreeable for all,* and

* About ninety years ago a remarkable letter was written by a prominent member of the Townsend family, then residing in Albany. It was addressed to another member of the family and was not to be made public. The writer had journeyed to Oyster Bay to interview Mrs. Elizabeth Titus, who had seen Washington three times and knew every member of the Townsend family. There had been two attempts made to destroy this letter, before it reached the Long Island Collection, by parties who did not know its value. Once it had actually been thrown into the fire, but other letters surrounded it so compactly that it would not burn. A rag-picker put the package in his bag and later disposed of those letters that were not scorched. It overthrows some family traditions, but helps to confirm the Culper documents. Extracts from it follow:

'Our conversation opened by reference to your resemblance to our ancestor Samuel, and by an easy transition fell upon the loves of our excellent aunts of Oyster Bay. Sarah Thorne has stated that Aunt Sarah was the magnet which attracted Winzingeroda. Mrs. Titus

MAJOR JOHN ANDRÉ

FROM AN ENGRAVING BY W. G. JACKMAN SUPPOSED TO COPY
A SKETCH MADE BY ANDRÉ HIMSELF

saved their none too complacent parent from the wrath of many a would-be enemy. Hannah, his first cousin and

thinks this cannot be. Aunt Sarah she says, was beloved by every one, a polite way, you know, of insinuating that no one took her in the full meaning of the word. She thinks too that not Winzingeroda but a brother lieutenant, Ocksie, was the great admirer of Aunt Phebe; he wrote a piece of verse, it appears, on the loss of a bow of ribbon from her shoe.

'These gentlemen belonged to the corps of Yagers, which esteemed itself above the Hessians. Lewis deWurmb was the Colonel and commanded the Island. Mrs. Titus remembers seeing him frequently at her father-in-law's at Westbury — She recollects a couple of officers besides lieutenants like the pair above — one of the name of Schoeffer, the other's name was pronounced like our Shaker. Wurmb and all his officers were men popular with the islanders for their unassuming and courteous demeanour towards them. On the contrary, Simcoe and his Rangers, a corps composed of recreant Americans, were universally detested, especially the chief. The British troops were of course in great part withdrawn from the Island in summer to enter into active field operations. In winter Flushing used to overflow with troops — It was customary to detail daily a number to Bayside and the neighborhood, generally rejoining their respective corps at night in the village from fear of the whalers. Mrs. Titus remembers the 17th Light Horse, thirty or forty of whom would often come down to her father's, turn their horses into his meadows, and invade and occupy the kitchen without saying a word. Once Joseph Lawrence presumed to remonstrate against their digging potatoes, and was peremptorily arrested and sent to learn better manners towards British Troops in Judge Hicks bars. Commonly the officers were polite, and it was by no means unusual for them to be invited to partake of the family dinner.

'The "Friends to the country" were few — Joseph Lawrence and others of his name and family on the neck — the Townsends of Oyster Bay — Samuel and Dr. James particularly — and the Onderdonks at Hempstead or the Harbour. Whenever they used to hear

neighbor, had already married Major Joseph Green, of the British Army. His sister Sarah had received from Colonel Simcoe a Valentine and other tokens of esteem.* Sir William Erskine had been entertained at Simcoe's headquarters in their home, and Major André had upon several occasions visited Colonel Simcoe there and was treated almost as one of the family. Sarah had frequently furnished her brother with important information, but now she must have sensed that something unusual was about to happen. Inquiries were being made about the shores of the Hudson in the vicinity of West Point, and, thinking himself unobserved, a supposed Whig from that section had entered the house and concealed in a little-used cupboard a letter. Sarah examined it as soon as he had slipped out. It seemed to be only a business letter

of the escapes of their country men on the main they contrived to gather in each other's houses, and find in their joy and mutual congratulations at such auspicious news some consolation for the hardships and the suspense they had to endure on account of their insulated position.

'Mrs. Titus remembers seeing Washington at three distinct periods. When he came through New York on his way to take command of the army. He landed at the Battery, and stepping into a sulky drove through "the fields," escorted by a few horse. Mrs. T. went with her father to the top of Beekman street to see him. He was dressed in a plain suit of drab. Her next sight of him was obtained in the same city a few days after the British troops evacuated the place. Her third and last she enjoyed at the time of the inauguration.'

* Before the first local history was printed J. Fenimore Cooper helped to immortalize in fiction, Sarah and her Valentine, in the closing chapter of *The Spy*.

addressed to James Anderson, but she determined to watch its fate. Later Major André entered the room. He searched through the closets and when he came to the letter hastily concealed it upon his person without examining it, and, taking a dish of doughnuts that were still hot from the fire, he hid them as an excuse for entering the forbidden precincts of the kitchen. Later, Sarah, by listening to a whispered conversation in Colonel Simcoe's room, could distinguish the words West Point, repeated several times.

A note to her brother Robert was hastily written. Captain Daniel Youngs, of the British Army, a lifelong friend, was sent for. He was told they were out of a certain kind of tea she would need for her party the following evening. It was to be had at her brother's store in New York and a messenger must be sent for it at once. Always accommodating, even though he had to wait nearly three years before he received on April 1, 1783, £200, and July 16, £200, in all over $1000 in hard money for his services, a horse and rider was furnished and before night closed, Robert Townsend was in possession of his sister's information. It was on its way to Setauket the next morning,* crossed the Sound between midnight and daylight, and soon Benjamin Tallmadge had the puzzling message. He had applied the counterpart to the stain and had barely time to decipher

* One of General Washington's horses was kept in New York City at this time, for the purpose of speeding these messages. The General paid for its feed out of a secret fund, but kept receipts, which are still preserved. This is probably the first mention of the fact.

it when another messenger rode up. He handed Major Tallmadge a long letter from Benedict Arnold. It was about horses and bread and other supplies and commissary troubles, but an appended footnote reads:

'If Mr. James Anderson,* a person I expect from New York should come to your quarters, I have to request that you will give him an escort of two Horse to bring him on his way to this place, and send an express to me that I may meet him. If your business will permit I wish you to come with him.

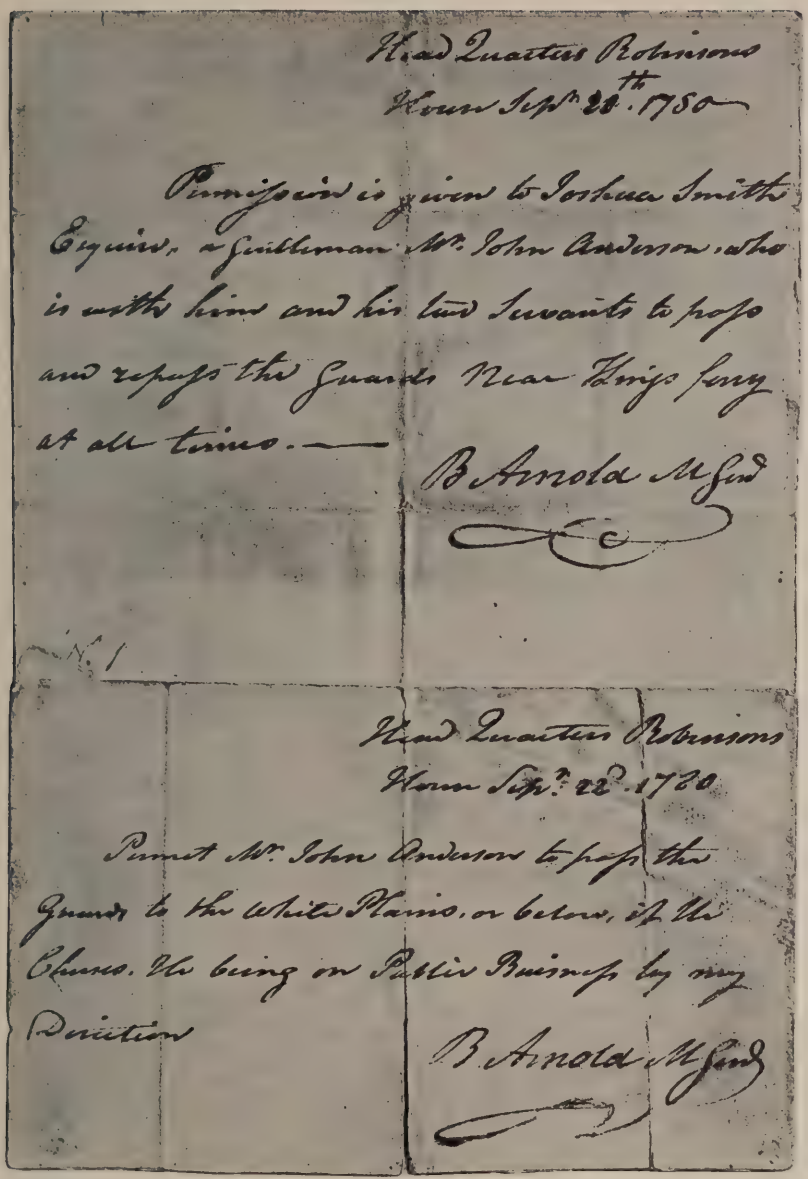
'B. Arnold.'†

Here, in one hand was word from our General in charge of West Point requesting that Mr. Anderson be not delayed, while in the other was intelligence that the British officers at Oyster Bay were talking about West Point upon receipt of a letter addressed to Mr. Anderson.

Major Tallmadge was endeavoring to discover the intentions of the enemy when Paulding and his companions brought a man to Headquarters they declared to be a spy. John Jameson, of the Second Regiment, Light Dragoons, was commanding officer at that time, and promptly dispatched the prisoner under guard to Benedict Arnold at West Point. He was well on his way when Major

* Mr. James Anderson. *James* for *John* is not a typographical error. Although perhaps until now it has never been noticed, nevertheless it is so in the original in the Library of Congress.

† Washington Papers, Library of Congress, No. 20155, September 13, 1780.



Head Quarters Robinsons
Hous Sept 22th 1780

Permission is given to Joshua Smith
Esquire, a Gentleman Mr John Anderson, who
is with him and his two Servants to pass
and repass the Guards Near Kings ferry
at all times.—

B Arnold M Gen

N. 1

Head Quarters Robinsons
Hous Sept. 22d. 1780

Permit Mr John Anderson to pass the
Guards to the White Plains, or below, if he
Chuses. He being on Public Business by my
Direction

B Arnold M Gen

PASSES IN HANDWRITING OF BENEDICT ARNOLD
CARRIED BY MAJOR ANDRÉ UNTIL HIS CAPTURE

Tallmadge returned that evening, but, learning that the prisoner's name was Anderson and that he had information from West Point, he insisted upon Jameson ordering his return. Reluctantly he consented, but would not recall the messenger that was carrying the information to Arnold. That 'John Anderson' acknowledged his real name to be Major André, Adjutant-General to the British Army, and that on the 2d of October, 1780, he was hanged as a spy, are facts well known to all. Major Tallmadge's comment in his 'Memoirs' is:

'I might enlarge greatly in anecdotes relating to this momentous event in our revolutionary war. Some things relating to the detention of Andre, after he had been sent to General Arnold, are purposely omitted.... I have deliberately concluded never to disclose the circumstances which relate to that interesting event.'

General Greene, in announcing the discovery of Arnold's treason * on September 24, 1780, stated:

'The Providential Train of Circumstances which led to it affords the most convincing Proofs that the Liberties of America are the Object of Divine Protection.'

None were more shocked at the news of André's execution than the Townsend family. Robert in particular feared that his friends among the British officers might betray him in retaliation. He considered it necessary to visit personally every one in his employ. Meanwhile, his store in New York was closed for nearly three weeks and

* Orderly Book, September 24, 1780. Original in the Adjutant-General's Office, War Department, Washington, D.C.

upon the day of his return entries were made of over £500 in cash that had been given to sundry persons. In a letter dated from Bedford, October 11, 1778,* Major Tallmadge writes:

'The conduct of Arnold, since his arrival at N.Y. has been such, that although he knows not a single link in the chain of my correspondence, still those who have assisted us in that way, are at present too apprehensive of Danger to give their immediate usual intelligence. I hope as the tumult subsides matters will go on in their old channel.

'Culper, Junr. has requested an interview with me on Long Island on the 13th inst, but in the present situation of affairs I believe it would be rather imprudent. What makes it peculiarly so at this time is the swarm of Refugee Boats which cruise along the shore of Long Island. I have wrote Culper, Junr. assuring him that his name or character are not even known by any officer but myself in the army, tho should your Excellency wish to have me meet Culper, Junr. I will appoint an interview at any time. With great Regard Regard,† Sir, Your Excellency's most obedient sert.

'Benj. Tallmadge.'

In reply to this General Washington wrote:

* 1778 it is written, but undoubtedly in error. Major Tallmadge must have had something else on his mind. He plainly meant to write 1780.

† *Regard* is repeated in the original, as above.

'*Dear Sir*, I recd. your favr. of the 11th, with C. Junior's enclosed. I think you were right in declining an interview at this time, as the enemy would act with more than common rigor just now. Should an officer be taken under circumstances the least suspicious — I should be exceedingly glad to hear from C. Junior, because all my accounts from other quarters are very defective as to the number of troops to be embarked, or, indeed, whether an embarkation is seriously in contemplation. The last account was of the 13th, and it was then said the expedition was delayed for some purpose or other.'

Townsend, meanwhile, in a letter addressed to John Bolton, Esq., replied to two he had received from Major Tallmadge, as follows:

729. 462. 20th, 1780

'*Sir*, Yours of the 30th of Sept. & 6th of October are now before me. In answer to the first, W-s assurances are as much as I could expect. When I conclude to open another route you shall be informed of it. I do not choose that the person you mention, or any other of his character, should call on me.

'I am happy to think that Arnold does not know my name. However, no person has been taken up on his information. I was not much surprised at his conduct, for it was no more than I expected of him. Genl. Clinton has introduced him to the General officers on parade as General Arnold in the British service, and he is much caressed by

General Robinson. This will tend to gloss his character with the venal part of the enemy, but the independent part must hold him in contempt; and his name will stink to eternity with the generous of all parties.

'I never felt more sensibly for the death of a person whom I knew only by sight, and had heard converse, than I did for Major Andre. He was a most amiable character. General Clinton was inconsolable for some days; and the army in general and inhabitants were much exasperated, and think that General Washington must have been destitute of feeling, or he would have saved him. I believe General Washington felt sincerely for him, and would have saved him if it could have been done with propriety.

'The long time I have been out of town prevents my giving you any information of consequence. The army which embarked last week are generally supposed intended to make a diversion in Virginia or Cape Fear in North Carolina, to favour Lord Cornwallis — They take but few horses, but a number of saddles with an intention to mount a number of dismounted dragoons who are going with them. The Cork and English fleets are, I expect, arrived by this. I hope and expect that all my letters are destroyed after they are perused. I am yours &c.

'Samuel Culper Junior.'

Culper Senior enclosed one of his in the above,[25] in which he says: 'C. Junr. is now with me.... I was in hopes you might have come and seen him.' Major Tallmadge forwarded these to General Washington on October 17th,

THE CAPTURE OF MAJOR ANDRÉ

FROM AN ENGRAVING AFTER
A PAINTING BY A. B. DURAND

L. P. Clover, for whom this was painted before 1835, records: 'Few persons in looking at this picture realize how closely identified the event it represents is with the history of our country. Col. Trumbull, when he saw it, said, "But for that event the Declaration of Independence might have proved abortive, and the blood of so many of our countrymen shed in vain."'

and in a note of his own[26] says: 'As circumstances have since turned out I wish I had met C. Junr. as mentioned in my last to Your Excellency.'

The momentary retirement of Townsend, Woodhull's fear to remain in the city, and request that Tallmadge undertake the expedition that terminated in the capture of Fort St. George, are features of the next letter, dated from New York October 26, 1780. In full, as translated, it reads as follows:

'*Dear Sir.* Your favour of the ee instant came to hand, and observe the contents. Your desire to have a shorter conveyance opened hath been repeatedly urged from time to time. I have this day returned from New York, and am sorry to informe you that the present commotions and watchfullness of the Enemy at New York hath resolved C. Jur. for the present to quit writing and retire into the country for a time. — Most certainly the enemy are very severe, and the spirits of our friends very low. I did not think myself safe there a moment, and as nothing is like to be done about New York, perhaps it may not be much disadvantage to drop it for a time, and if need requires C. Junr. will undertake again, and in the interum if anything in particular is wanted to be known, shall be ready to serve and faithfully transmit what I may know. The enemy's Fleet left the Hook on the 17 — and very probable this moment are landed in Virginia. They were in case of a separation to rendezvous in Hampton Roads. Another embarcation is thought will take place soon, ac-

companied by Sir Henry Clinton, and is thought will proceed to reinforce Lord Cornwallace. The sum of their intention is you may depend, to exert their whole force against the Southern Provinces. The Militia together with their ships and about four thousand regular Troops are to defend New York this winter. The English fleet consisted of about fifty sail the better half merchantmen. The best information that can be collected says the recruits do not exceed twenty five hundred men with one general officer. They have had a short passage and are not very sickly. A cork fleet is daily expected, and the enemy are in fears about them. Should they not arrive it would ruin them and the inhabitants of Long Island. The French have taken twenty six sail of outward bound East and West Indiamen, five of them were bound to the East Indies. The 17th Dragoons in about five days will be at Musqueto Cove, handy to take some of the gentlemen. They are now at Cedar Swamp. — The enemy are foraging in these parts, with a very small guard of Militia Troops. I yesterday saw a guard of 17 men following one hundred and five Brigade Wagons. Most certainly they will be this way in three or four days, and expect they will go to South Hampton. Yourself with fifty men might do as you would with them. They are much off their guard. I think if you undertake and call on me you will do something handsome. Arnold is about to publish an address to his County Men, which am fearful may do you much harm, assuring all officers and men countenance and protection, that may come in, and have the same rank in the British service as

they have now in your army. Thus sir, have communicated as much as possibly could — and in the mean time Remain your most obed. Humbl. Servt.

'Saml. Culper.'

The saddest letter in the correspondence comes next. Some of those Friends of their Country were captured by the British in New York. Culper transmits the information to John Bolton in the following letter:

'Setauket, *November 12th*, 1780

'*Dear Sir.* — Your favour of the k instant is received — and observe the contents — In answer to your first question I again inform you, that I was at New York about the 20th of last month. I then, with the advice of C. Junr. and others, transmitted you the most accurate account of the embarkation under Genl. Mathews that could possibly obtain, and assured you of their going to Virginia, as also of another embarkation bound to the Southward, then just in embryo — which were positively to sail three days ago. said to amount to 1300 men. I then informed you of the severity and watchfulness of the Enemy. Several of our dear friends were imprisoned, in particular one that hath been ever serviceable to this correspondence. This step so dejected the spirits of C. Junr. that he resolved to leave New York for a time. I earnestly endeavoured to prevent it but could not, so that I have no person there now that I can send the Express to that can rely upon. — In respect to the different corps and numbers

that have embarked and those within these lines, I cannot ascertain, neither do I think it can possibly be done properly, for this reason. The Enemy make it a rule to supply every embarcation almost with draughts from every Regt in their army. The beforementioned reason, together with some other difficulties that attend me at this time, prevents me from making the attempt to give you a return of the enemy, and hope you'll excuse my non complyance. Austin Roe returned from New York two days ago. The Cork Fleet was not then arrived. The Enemy in great fears about them. I think they must fall into your hands for the want of provision if the fleet should miscarry. The last accounts from England say that 23 line of Battle Ships belonging to the Russians and Danes were at Spithead — What can this mean. The 17th Dragoons is at Hempstead. The Hessian Yeagers at Jericho and Oyster Bay. There's troops at Jamaica and Flushing, which is all I can say. Last Thursday there was a hot press in New York to man Admiral Rodney's Fleet which is about to sail, said for the West Indies. There's now 13 sail of the line besides Frigates Laying in Gardiner's Bay at the eastward. There's a very intelligent person gone to New York now, on the same account. Have taken the liberty to direct Brewster to cross again on the 19th instant when shall hope to hear from you. After that shall make one more appointment, as I intend to visit every quarter of the enemy if possible, and write you fully as I expect the winter will soon prevent the communication and in the Spring if need requires by some means or other will if possible open it

again on a better footing. Depend my endeavours shall continue, as I hope never to lose sight of our cause, truly sensible our all is at stake. I greatly desire to see you but little hope of it at present, and conclude your affectionate Friend and Humble Servt.

'Saml. Culper.'

Major Tallmadge quickly responded to the advice of Samuel Culper. Indeed, so quickly that Fort St. George was captured sooner than Woodhull expected it would be.

Years afterwards, Major Tallmadge's account of this expedition was written for his 'Memoirs.' Another officer, one of the party, who had accompanied Brewster on several occasions, fresh from the smoke of the battle, wrote in detail to a friend an account of the expedition. As until now his account has never been published, it is here carefully copied:

'Fairfield, *November* 26, 1780.

'*My dear Friend* — I am at a loss how the account stands between us respecting letters, but as it is immaterial at present if I am in debt to you, I now propose to myself the pleasure of paying it, and if it brings you in debt I am sure you will take pleasure in discharging it, however as this is a mere subject of ceremony, will quit it, and tell you a small story of a tour we have had to St. George's Manor, on Long Island. We arrived in this town from North Castle ye 16th Instant. Major Tallmadge, Captain Edgar, myself, and 40 dismounted Dragoons. The weather and

want of provisions detained us here until 21st, when we embarked on board 8 whale boats, and in a few hours landed at the Old Mans on the Island. A severe storm prevented our doing any thing until the evening of the 22d, when we began our march with the addition of about 20 men, boatmen, and at 4 o'clock in the morning of the 23d, attacked and carried Fort St. George, (on Major Wm. Smith's Farm) in a few minutes without the loss of one man.

'It is a very pretty built strong place. The works was completed a few days before. They were completely surprised. We tarried there until about 7 o'clock, when we began the march back and on the return burned about 300 tons of forage at Coram, collected for the British Army. We arrived at our boats about 6 o'clock, and at eleven landed safe at this place, more fatigued and more pleased than I ever was in my life. In little more than twenty-four hours we marched 40 miles and crossed the sound 20 miles wide.

'The Fort is built right west from Mr. Smith's new house, about the same distance that the old house is from the new. It is four square, about ninety feet square. The parapet from the bottom of the ditch is about 10 feet high, the ditch about 4 feet wide and 3 deep. Besides this is a strong row of Abbatis entirely around the Fort. From the N. E. corner of the Fort to ye N. W. corner of the old house to ye N. E. of the new house and from the S. W. ( ) the new house to the S. E. corner of the Fort ( ) of the fort is on the east side, and opens under cover of

this strong stockade. Having fully described to you this post will just mention the mode of attack.

'When we arrived within about three quarters of a mile of the place, I was ordered to the command of 15 men to gain the front of the Fort and there lay concealed until the alarm was given from the other way, by the main body under Major Tallmadge, Captain Edgar, and Lieut. Brewster. I came very close to the Abbatis undiscovered and as soon as the alarm was given, pushed over the Abbatis ditch and parapet, with little opposition, without the loss of one man and without discharging one musket on my part, and met Lieut. Brewster just entering the gates. He came through the entry of the house, followed by the main body, except a small party which filed off and attacked at the same time the old house. The poor dogs had not time to rub their eyes, or gasp before they were obliged to cry Quarters. A musical sound. Here was a scene my friend, of war my eyes never beheld nor description cannot equal. The cries of the wounded in the agonies of death. The screeching of the women and children while the parent and friend were entreating pity and compassion, called forth every tender feeling, yet add to these the shouts of the veterans it gives a pleasing lustre to the triumphs of a soldier.

'We had one man wounded. The enemy about 7 killed and wounded. Prisoners: 1 Lt. Coln. and 1 Capt. half pay. One lieutenant and 50 rank and file. Some were paroled and we have about forty, which I move off to West Point with tomorrow. This tour will take me 7 or 8 days, soon

after which I hope to see you, as it grows time for winter quarters and very probably we shall come some where in Connecticut. . . You must excuse inaccuracies as I write in haste. Adieu.

'Thos. Tredwell Jackson.'

Woodhull wrote, congratulating Major Tallmadge on November 28th,[27] and then followed a period of several months in which the letters are missing. One dated March 18, 1781,[28] mentions that 'C. Junr. is again in New York and entering into business again as heretofore, and you may soon I hope receive his dispatches.' But his repeated requests that his letters be destroyed was now probably complied with, for with one exception only stain letters can be found and they cannot now be deciphered. From Newburgh on August 10, 1782, General Washington addressed Major Tallmadge as follows:

'I wish you without delay to open again, or at least to renew effectually, the channel of intelligence through the C..s. I know your correspondents have heretofore, in general, been well informed and that the only great difficulty has been in the circuitous route of communication.'

The answer to this is dated Newtown, August 18, 1782.

'*Sir*: I have had the honor to receive your Excellency's letter of the 10th inst. in consequence of which I immediately repaired to Fairfield, and effected an interview with S. G. to whom I communicated the purport of Your Excellency's letter. At the same time I forwarded, by him,

similar instructions to S. C. Senior and Junr. The absence of Capt. Brewster on a short cruise to the eastward, may perhaps occasion some delay, but I cannot but believe my correspondents will exert themselves on this occasion, as I have wrote pressingly on the subject.

'From some intimations I have reason to believe that a certain Character, in great repute among the Refugees and very particularly intimate with Col. Upham A.D.C. to Genl. Clinton, would be happy in an opportunity to render important services to the State and army. His character is by no means notorious, but very sagatious. I have ventured to write him on the subject of intelligence, and have great hopes from his services.

'I must again repeat to Your Excellency the necessity of having a sum of money, as well as a little stain, forwarded for the use of this Communication — to the want of both these articles I presume may be attributed in some measure, the declination of this correspondence.

'I have the Honor to be, With the highest esteem and regard, Sir, Your Excellency's most obedient servant,

'Benj. Tallmadge.'

This last of the Culper Junior letters to survive contained welcome news for weary soldiers: It was carried by Robert Townsend into Westchester County, where he met Major Tallmadge, who forwarded it to Washington. Dated September 19, 1782, it reads as follows:

'The last packet, so far from bringing better news to the

loyalists, has indeed brought the clearest and unequivocal Proofs that the independence of America is unconditionally to be acknowledged, nor will there be any conditions insisted on for those who have joined the King's Standard.

'It is said that an Expedition is now forming at N.Y. and by many conjectured to be against the French Fleet &c. at Boston; a number of British Troops were embarking when I left the city on the 14th and 15th inst. But I conversed fully with one of Carleton's Aides on this subject, who told me that I might depend they were bound to the W. Indies or Halifax. For my own part I have no expectation that they think of any offensive movements. The above gentleman, with whom I am most intimately connected, informed me that it is now under consideration to send all the B. Troops to the West Indies and to garrison the City with the jagers and new raised corps for the present.

'A fleet is now taking in water at Staten Island and another at White Stone — various conjectures about their destination. It is a fact that a fleet is going to Charlestown to bring off that Garrison.

'A packet is just about sailing for England and another will follow very shortly, and Sir Guy himself says that he thinks it not improbable that the next Packet may bring orders for an evacuation of N. York.

'A fleet is getting ready to sail for the Bay of Fundy about the first of October to transport a large number of Refugees to that Quarter. The Aide above referred to informs us that he thinks it probable he shall go there him-

self. Indeed, I never saw such general distress and dissatisfaction in my life as is painted in the countenance of every Tory at N.Y.

'The Beef Contractors had orders a few days past to cease purchasing any more for the Navy and from the appearance of things the whole fleet are getting ready for a movement.

'I am myself uncertain when the Troops will leave N.Y. but I must confess I rather believe if the King's Magazines can be removed, that they will leave us this fall.

'The King's wood yards are tolerably supply'd but they have no Magazines of forage.'

Major Tallmadge confirmed Townsend's statement in his letter of March 31, 1783, and asked to be permitted to be one of the first to enter New York.[29]

At the request of the General, he sent from Litchfield on August 16, 1783, an account of the incidental expenses that had been incurred in the Secret Service work, which account is missing. One that Culper Senior submitted on July 5th, and which formed a part of it, is still preserved.

It is worthy of note that both the Culpers lived for over fifty years after the war began. Some day some one may wish to put in type the story of those interesting years.

NOTES

(1) For ten years an endeavor to discover a handwriting that corresponded with the existing documents written by Samuel Culper Junior, was continued without success, until, upon examining a chest of old documents, once the property of Robert Townsend of Oyster Bay, Long Island, a startling resemblance was discovered. This led to a critical examination of the letters written under the *alias* of Samuel Culper Junior, still preserved among the papers of General Washington, and it was found that the paper upon which they were written was identical. The same watermark, the same shade, the same weight, the same laid marks minutely varying one from the other on the same sheet, but corresponding exactly with all the little variations and flaws with other sheets among the Townsend Papers. The handwriting, looking so similar, was not declared identical until the world's greatest expert, Albert S. Osborn, had examined it. The books showed accounts with Abraham Woodhull, who had already been identified as Culper Senior, and with several others known to be engaged in the Secret Service work. The movements of Culper Junior corresponded with those of Robert Townsend as revealed in his documents, and the stain invented by James Jay had been twice tested on documents still carefully preserved among Townsend's effects. Long before all the evidence was discovered, it was certain that the identity of Culper Junior, that most active Spy of the Revolution, had been revealed. Everything that is now being gathered adds to the confirmation of that identity.

(2) Robert, although not yet of age, like his brother, Solomon, traveled extensively before the Revolution. From Wilmington, North Carolina, on November 22, 1774, he addressed his father as follows:

'*Honored Father:* I wrote you a few days since from Brunswick. Have now to advise you of my arrival here the 18th. Instant. — I am much afraid whether I shall be able to purchase any Flaxseed being very little yet come to markett. — There is considerable to come from the country, which they cant yet bring owing to the waters being so very low in river. — I am with Duty to Mother, love to Brothers & Sisters, 'Your Dutyfull Son,

'Robt. Townsend.

'P. S. Expect we shall sail about the 1st. of Decr.'

(3) Besides what will be found in these pages regarding Nathaniel Woodhull, there is much of interest that appears to have escaped the historians in the Journals of the Provincial Congress of the State of New York. There are still preserved many letters written by cousins of Abraham Woodhull, among the most interesting of them being those from the Reverend John Woodhull, son of Culper Senior's uncle John, and therefore one of his first cousins. In writing to his wife, he describes the battle of Long Island as he witnessed it from a distance as follows:

'*Near Midnight, Aug.* 27, 1776.

'*My Dear Sally:* — The solemn Day is come at last, — Long Island is made a field of Blood — now the cannon & small arms make a continued roar, even at this time of Night: Day before yesterday the battle began, and with some intermission has continued till now, yea now is roaring in my ears and God only knows when it will end.

'Yesterday morning it was very hot, as yet we have no account which may be fully depended on, only that in general that Howe has landed with most of his men upon Long Island. Small parties engaged till yesterday morning, when they made an attack upon us, they were beat back three times, the last time our People pursued them too far, when a strong reinforcement of the Enemy endeavored to cut off our retreat and did us a good deal of damage, tis reported that General Sullivan and Stirling are missing. Tis also said we have made great

havoc amongst them — but I can tell but very little for certainty as yet, except that there is a mighty Battle which is continuing — May a good God grant that it end in our favor and for the glory of his Name! Goodnight!'

'*Aug. 30th*, 1776.

'*My Dear Sally:* — Thro' divine goodness I am very well as are our congregation in general that are here. Adam Woods has the ague. General Washington has thought proper to draw his men from Long Island, this was done last night.

'The enemy are now firing upon New York, from Long Island; our men here are drawing up to be in readiness, in case we are needed.

'How many were lost upon the Island is yet uncertain, some say we have 700 missing and that we have killed twice as many of the enemy, tho I believe it is but guess work as yet —

'Generals Sullivan and Stirling who are missing are said to be prisoners, it is also said general Grant on the other side is killed, they talk of another General of theirs Killed.

'It is reported that Col. Atly is wounded and a prisoner. Think it likely that our people will burn New York, and retreat into the chain of Forts which are above it — when that is done am in hopes our Enemies will get no farther. Poor Long Island! I know not what will become of my Relations there. May God help them. They are left to the mercy of our Cruel Enemy.

'Our men are in high spirits and I trust we shall, thro' ye help of God soon break the power of our Foes.

'My Love to the Girls, my little son, and the Neighbors. Remember me to Elsy and the boys — and accept yourself the best affections of your...

'JOHN WOODHULL.'

(4) *Letter from Abraham Woodhull to Major Tallmadge.*

'No. 13 20 *June* 5, 1779

'*Dear Sir*, Your No 7 came to hand and have observed its contents. I Purpose this only to informe you of my Misfortune on the 24 of April. John Wolsey returned from Connecticut being Paroled by the Company of Prisoners (although taken in a Privateer). And Lodged

information against me before Coll. Simcoe of the Queens Rangers who thinking of finding me at Setauket came down but happily I set out for N. York the day before his arrival, and to make some compensation for his voige he fell upon my father and plundered him in a most shocking manner. I hearing of it and his intentions, used every endeavour to defeat his designs which I happily did in a measure by a friend of mine makeing interest with the Genl Aid and only that saved me. But I am very obnoxious to them and think I am in continual danger you will see the contents of the other letter and the proposals there made and at once see the necessity of destroying these letters after perusull.

'I was in town that night you was. I wish I had a known it. I am with esteem Yours &c.

'SAMUEL CULPER.'

(5) *Letter from Abraham Woodhull to Major Tallmadge.*

‹No. 13 20 *June* 5, 1779 — 12

'*Sir*, Your No 7 came to hand and have duely observed the contents. It is now a long time since I have wrote you, And do assure you not through neglect but owing to the difficulty I have laboured under ever since I saw you — In my other letter I have stated the particulars. And I dre say you will be filled with wonder and surprise, that I have had the good fortune to escape confinement. And am sorry to inform you that it hath rendered me almost unservicable to you. I purpose quitting *10* and residing at *20*. As I am now a suspected person I cannot frequent their camp as heretofore. And think only just residing at *10* and be obliged to take up with common reports will not answer your purpose, or make by any means compensation for the expense — I have truely the interest of our Country at heart * and could not wish to spend one shilling useless — I shall visit *10* as often as I can with any degree of safety — and have not as yet stoped the channel of intelligence and shall anxiously wait your directions — Weather I shall endeavour to establish a confidential friend to step into my place if agreeable direct in your next and forward the ink — When I have effected this most probable I shall come to you. And shall wish to joyne

* Abraham Woodhull loaned money to the State, upon their request. See *New York in the Revolution*, vol. 2, p. 196.

in the common defence — I shall now endeavour to give you an authentick account of the principle arrivals and departures of all fleets — foreign intelligence, and the temper and expectations of the enemy and movements since the 14th of May, all before hath been forwarded. The latter of which I am sensible can be of little or no service now but may be some satisfaction. About the 15th May sailed a cork fleet and on the *18* arrived 12 sail from Cork with provisions and serveral private ships have arrived at different times from Europe one bringing the news of the surrender of Pondicherry in India. but I do not believe it yet. you may depend that the Cutter that said to bring the news saild some time from Ireland and of course before the last Cork fleet and they brought no such account. Provisions are very plenty at *10* and a Cork fleet is expected also a large fleet from England with ten thousand troops is said to be expected in, in about ten days. The troops that went from hence last fall for West India and Georgia it is said are about returning. I think it probable for they are very sickly in those quarters I hear some tell us of Peace amongst you. God grant it may take place on honourable terms. But I must tell you thers less appearance of Peace here now than some time agone — And thers nothing we can hear from Europe that demonstrates it. The spirits of their troops is high, and the expectation of the Tory's is great to admiration. I hope you will not trust to an uncertainty, but prepare for the worst. I have a long time expected to hear of your appearing in force near the Bridge and keeping them in their strongholds and hope that their present expedition may serve to further convince them of the impracticability of subduing this country. And call your army together and be upon your guard and be very industrious to find out the schemes of the Torys amongst you. Almost every action is handed down by them and men is said to pass (and I believe they do) from hence to the enemy on the frontiers. The enemy have almost intirely quit Long Island and the whole of the on Long Island does not exceed three hundred only a few individuals left at their different stations they have likewise taken all their baggage from Long Island and on the 29 arrived their Virginia fleet with about 30 prizes, mostly small schooners and a number of negroes and some white females, upon the whole that expedition is thought but little of and as the 30 sailed

immediately up the river about 20 transports the Raisonable of 64 guns and 2 frigats on the 28th the army and troops in general left *10* together with all their train of artillery that stood on the common. There was not on the 3 instant one thousand troops in and about the city only one Batallion of guards and two small German Regt. to do duty in and about *10* There orders for to raise a number of men for the terme of six months out of the Militia of Kings and Queens Countys to do duty as occasion may require. This is very disagreeable to the inhabitants. On the 3 instant there was only 3 frigates in the river except those before mentioned — Thus sir I shall conclude with this request that you would upon sufficient Perusual consume it for if by any accident this or any other of my letters should fall into the enemy's hands very probable my handwriting or some circumstance mentioned might be the cause of detection. And conclude with my great desire for your success and welfair. I remain your most obet. H. Servt. Samuel Culper. Just as I was about to seal this I saw a gentleman from 10 that said every sixth man in 10 and the before mentioned places were immediately to be Draughfet I purpose waiting at 20 until I receive an answer from you.

'S. C.'

(6) *George Washington to Major Talmadge.*

'New Windsor, *June 27th*, 1779

'*Sir*, Your letter of yesterday came safe to my hand, and by the Dragoon who was the bearer of it I send you Ten guineas for C——r. — His successor (whose name I have no desire to be informed of provided his intelligence is good, and seasonably transmitted) should endeavour to hit upon some certain mode of conveying his information quickly, for it is of little avail to be told of things after they have become matter of public notoriety, and known to every body. — This new agent should communicate his signature and the private marks by which genuine papers are to be distinguished from counterfeits. — There is a man on York Island living on or near the North River, of the name of George Higday who I am told hath given signal proofs of his attachment to us, and at the same time stands well with the enemy. If upon enquiry this is found to be the case (and much caution should

be used in investigating the matter, as well on his own account as on that of Higday) he will be a fit instrument to convey intelligence to me while I am on the west side of the North River, as he is enterprizing & connected with people in Bergen County who will assist in forming a chain to me in any manner they shall agree on.

'I do not know who H—— employs, but from H—— I obtain intelligence, and his name and business should be kept profoundly secret, otherwise we not only lose the benefits desired from it, but may subject him to some unhappy fate....

'I wish you to use every method in your power through H—— and others, to obtain information of the enemy's situation — and as far as it is to be come at, designs. C——r speaks of the Enemy's force up the River as now exceeding 8000 men, but as I know he is mistaken if he comprehends their whole force I should be glad if his successor was cautioned against giving positive numbers by guess. — this is deceptious — let him ascertain the particular Corps which can be no difficult matter to do, & he will soon by taking a little pains indirectly, come at the strength of them and where they lye.

'I am Sir with esteem and regard, Yr. very H. Servt.

'Go. Washington.'

(7) *Townsend's first official letter.*

'No 1 New York, *29th June*, 1779

'*Sir*, The present offers nothing material, save that of the arrival of Capt. Mernaid, who left Plimouth the first of May, at which time the Grand fleet for this place had not sailed, and was quite uncertain when they would, and likewise that some Troops now coming out — say not more than three thousand. However as he is a Rebel we do not entirely believe it, but are much afraid that its too true.

'I was this day informed that 2 British Regts. 1 Regt. of Amsuch, Col. Fanning's Corps & the associated loyalists, is now at white Stone, where they arrived yesterday from Rhode-Island — This I have no doubt of, as it was told me by a person who came passenger with them — He thinks they are to make excursions into Connecticut — and from what I can collect I believe they are, and very soon.

'Most of the Troops are come from Verplanks Point, and are now

near and about the Boats. Several Transports are ordered to be in readiness, but no troops embarked.

'We are much alarmed with the prospect of a Spanish war — Should that be the case, I fear poor old England will not be able to oppose the whole but will be obliged to sue for a peace.

'Wou'd wish to write you more particularly, but the person going sooner than I expected prevents.

'I am, Sir, Your Humble Servant,

'SAMUEL CULPER.'

(8) *Townsend's second letter.*

'No. 2 10, *July 15th*, 1779.

'*Sir*, I did not mean that No. 1 shou'd be sent as it was wrote, I intended it as hints for my friend S. C. Senr., and expected that he would have wrote you more particularly — the shortness of the notice, and not at that time being sufficiently acquainted with the Character of 30, prevented my writing so particular as I wou'd have wished — However I flatter myself that it was of some service. I saw S. C. Senr. a few days ago, and informed him of the arrival of 10 sail of vessels from the West Indies, with Rum, &c. and a small fleet from Halifax, but no Troops. 12 sail of Cork Victuallers arrived on Sunday last — 2 which were then missing are since arrived. Also a ship from Theneruffe loaden with wines — A Fleet, say about six sail, from Jamaica laden with Rum &c. is daily expected; they are to take the advantage of the June Convoy for England. The Romulus of 44 guns fell down to the Hook this day. The Daphni and Delaware Frigates are to fall down tomorrow, with some eight Transports which are said to be bound for Halifax. The Romulus, Daphni, & Delaware are to cruise in Boston Bay for the purpose of annoying their trade, and to intercept a number of Privateers and armed vessels which it is said are now fitting out of Boston. I have conversed with some of the most intelligent of the Masters of the Cork Victuallers, and from what I can collect from them, there will be but few Troops from England this season. Some say, who I am certain do not wish it, that there will not be more than 4 Regiments to this place. Ireland is almost to a man against the present administration, and that most loyal of all Countrys, Scotland,

has been for some time past in the greatest confusion, said to be occasioned by a motion made by Lord North for to pass some Laws in favor of the Scotch Roman Catholicks — they have gone so far as to burn that Ministry in Effigie — This is fact.

'I have recd yours of the 10th Inst. and note the contents — The instructions shall be followed as far as in my power. 30 came unexpectedly this evening, and says he must go out tomorrow morning, which prevents my being so particular as I could wish. I did not expect him till saturday. The situation of the army I cannot give you with any exactness; but will endeavour to send it by next opportunity. You may rest assured that I will not give you any intelligence as fact, but such as I am certain is so. I will not intentionally deceive you, as I know that it may be attended with the most fatal consequences. I gave S. C. Senr. some hints concerning a Christopher Duyckenik, formerly Chairman of the Committee of Mechanicks of this place, and hope he has transmitted. This much I will inform you, that he has acted as agent for David Mathews from the commencement of the war. The particulars must be kept a profound secret, as few persons but myself know them, and it is known that I do. Note a paragraph in Rivington's paper of the 10th Inst. under the N.Yk. head, and you'll observe that something has either leaked out or they have conjectured very right.

'I am, Sir, Your Humble Servant,

'Samuel Culper, Junr.'

(9) *Would have Townsend give up business.*

'722 to 721. No. 23 729 *August* 12, 1779.

'*Sir*, Your several Nos. 13, 14, & 15, are before me. The contents have duly observed and submitted them to Culper Jur. and he hath in general replyed, that have only to add, That your fears of the Queens Rangers crossing the Sound, I think must be groundless. I think the main reason of their being stationed ther's to Succor Coll. Ludloe's Regt. on Lloyd's Neck if need should require, and to recruit their Horses and men, that are much worne down with service. Agreeable to your request, shall endeavour to gain every intelligence from that and every other quarter and communicate. Your observations con-

cerning the bad tendency that might follow the Capture of certain Persons mentioned heretofore, is worthy of due consideration. And perhaps it will be best to let them fill up the measure of their Sins, and ripen for greater ruin. If it had been done instantly after the capture of some persons here I should have feared no danger that might have risen from such a step. You could have stoped plundering here nevertheless — To have taken two for one then, matter not wheather Whig or Tory, would have been pollitick in you, and a glorious barrier in favour of our Country, and Nutrallity, for as they are continually pressing us to be active, and daily cursing of us for not complying, and laying at your mercy and unprotected by them; and suffering for so small an affair, perhaps would induce them to think more favorable of us, and consider our situation, and treat us with more compassion. — I say if ever such an opportunity should present again, I shall beg that it may be embraced, and would be highly favorable to this unhappy country, now universally throughout attended with the greatest sickness and frequent deaths that ever was remembered by the oldest man now living. And dayly threaten'd by that Judas Tryon. Devastation or banishment for not complying with their exorbitant demand enclosed when striped of Items, and out of our Power to fulfill — don't let the inclosed be published in News Paper.

'Your desire that no time may be lost after dispatches arrive hath ever been complyed with, at appointed times, I always attended. When he comes unexpectedly it hath been unavoidably attended with some loss of time, once in particular, owing to a certain persons family being sick, and attendance there which debared him from making himself known. A step on purpose to acquaint me. I received a message from a person that I intimated in my last was an acquaintance of Hamiltons, three days ago, that 4 or 5 Regts. were embarking, generally said for Quebeck had taken altogether thick clothing, yet nevertheless he thought most likely for Georgia, and believed they all had but a short time to stay here.

'I have had much discourse with Culper, Jur. Contrary to his intimation and my expectation, he continues in business, that engroseth some part of his time, and interfereth with the important business he hath undertaken. I do assure you he is a sincere friend and capable of

rendering service to our country. And as such a one I have again most earnestly endeavored and beged him to disengage himself from all concerns that may intefere with the Public business he hath undertaken. His reply in substance was this, that he feared his inability. He was willing to do all he could to serve his Country, and not leave himself entirely out of the line of business, and be destitute of a support.'

(10) *Use of ciphers by the Culpers.*

'No. 21 729 29 15*th* 1779.

'*Sir.* Dqpeu Beyocpu agreeable to 28 met 723 not far from 727 & received a 356, but on his return was under the necessity to destroy the same, or be detected, but have the satisfaction to informe you that theres nothing of 317 to 15 you of. Thers been no augmentation by 592 of 680 or 347 forces, and everything very quiet. Every 356 is opened at the entrance of 727 and every 371 is searched, that for the future every 356 must be 691 with the 286 received. They have some 345 of the route our 356 takes. I judge it was mentioned in the 356 taken or they would not be so 660. I do not think it will continue long so. I intend to visit 727 before long and think by the assistance of a 355 of my acquaintance, shall be able to out wit them all. The next 28 for 725 to be here is the 1 of 616 that it is so prolonged. It may be better times before then. I hope ther will be means found out for our deliverance. Nothing could induce me to be here but the ernest desire of 723. Friends are all well, and am your very Humble Servant, 722.'

(11) *This is the Secret Code used by General Washington, Benjamin Tallmadge, Robert Townsend, and Abraham Woodhull, during the Revolutionary War.*

Use of	*Means*	*Use of*	*Means*	*Use of*	*Means*
a	g	711	General Washington	15	advice
b	h			28	appointment
c	i	712	Clinton	60	better
d	j			121	day
e	a	721	Major Tallmadge	156	deliver
f	b		alias John Bolton	151	disorder
g	c	722	Abraham Woodhull	178	enemy
h	d		alias Samuel Culper	230	guineas

Use of	*Means*
i	e
j	f
k	
l	r
m	l
n	m
o	k
p	n
q	o
r	
s	
t	
u	s
v	t
w	u
x	v
y	w
215	February
374	March
22	April
373	May
337	July
29	August
616	September
462	October
427	November

Use of	*Means*
723	Robert Townsend alias Samuel Culper, Jr.
724	Austin Roe
725	Caleb Brewster
726	
727	New York
728	Long Island
729	Setauket
745	England
e	1
f	2
g	3
i	4
l	5
m	6
n	7
o	8
q	9
u	0

Use of	*Means*
286	ink
309	infantry
317	importance
322	inquiry
345	knowledge
347	land
349	low
355	lady
356	letter
371	man
476	parts
585	refugees
592	ships
660	vigilant
680	war
691	written

(12) *Samuel Culper tells of dangers.*

'729 *Sepr.* 19, 1779

'*Dear Sir.* Agreeable to the few lines in the inclosure of the several dates of the 11 & 12, I parted with 725 and expected his immediate returne to you, But next day understood he was waiting for the enclosed dispatch, replying his boat must have a repair before he could come again — Perhaps it is best, as the former dispaches hath been so long detained I judge they have nearly lost their value, if any. The inclosed written with the stain, I am ready to believe contains something of importance. By the report of Pevbep Yqqhbwmm, who hath just returned from 727 he tells me there's a council of war holding of all the General Officers and every thing appears to be much confused on account of an Express from Genl. Prescot that a Sloop arrived at

Rhode Island sailed two days in sight of a large French fleet stearing North West course in latitude 25 or 35 he cannot remember certain which. That a large number of troops were embarking, Transports prepared to receive one thousand and those on board. He was one of the Petitioners but got nothing but hard words, that infernal Tryon saying we would never raise any men for government, and now the Spanish and French had combined against them and in difficulty would grant them no assistance. It would be no matter he said if we were all laid waist and those that were sick he would put in their hospitals. I hope a foreign fleet is at hand and that some thing may intefere to our advantage — I have just heard from Oyster Bay that Coll. Simcoe is a going to leave that place. They are selling their horses that is their own private property and are loading all their baggage, his destination unknown but believed they will all leave us soon.

'I yesterday was waiting for the Express with the enclosed dispatch at Stony Brook, when about one o'clock warning was given out from Capt. Woodhull for his Company to meet persuant to an order from Coll. Floyd to the several Capts. of this Township, to pursue and lay wait for Ebenezar Dayton and his companions, that last night plundered two houses at South. I immediately took a confidential friend and went in search of 725, and after passing by one boat hid in the woods, found his, and him, and advised him the necessary steps for his safety. I then repair'd to the place of rendezvous, and found the Militia just in motion to drive mount misery, to prevent which I was obliged to open myself to the several Capts. and had the good fortune to order matters to my mind. These things you will readily conceive lays me open, and I desire you to take such measures to prevent the like again. Plundering makes as much difficulty with us as perhaps taking of some persons. Dayton's * excursion heretofore, was the sole

* The east end of Long Island will always remember Ebenezer Dayton as the man who gave them the measles. He became known as a daring privateer during the early days of the Revolution, but, not satisfied to obey the rules of war, he made excursions on land that amounted to robbery. In retaliation the Tories crossed to his store in Connecticut and robbed him of £450 in gold and destroyed most of his effects. After the Revolution he became a peddler, and upon this particular occasion visited East Hamp-

cause of the loss of C. Jur. No. 5. The Refugees and some Troops were filling the road that the express was to pass.

'Culper Junior hath appointed no time. I therefore appoint the 30th Instant for 725 to cross, and am yours &c. 722. N.B. If you think well of it send several phials of that stain and I will place it in two or three confidential persons hands in New York that will do their endeavour.'

(13) *A typical Townsend letter.*

'*October 9th*, 1779.

'*Sir*, In my No 9 I informed you that the first division of Troops had returned — They disembarked on Long-Island & Staten Island that day. The next morning about 100 of the inhabitants went on Governer's Island, and began to repair the works there, and have continued going every day since. — The works are now nearly completed. About that time the Garrison was much alarmed, as by a number of coroborating documents they had great reason to expect D'Estaing. All the Men of War and a number of arm'd Transports were ordered down to the Hook, with several old hulks to sink in the Channel in case D'Estaing should appear. They had also two or three fire ships prepairing, and are building a very strong Fort at the Light House. The ships do still continue there, tho their fears are now in some measure abated. The transports destin'd for New York are still at White Stone, and it's now thought quite uncertain whether it will be evac-

ton with fancy goods for sale, arriving Saturday evening. On Sunday, although having symptoms of the measles, and against the advice of the hostess who had entertained him, he persisted in attending Church service, thereby notifying the public of his presence. News of his indiscretion was spread over the town and the indignation of the people was so obvious that he left in the early morning following. He was pursued by a few young men, overtaken, brought back to the village, ridden on a rail through the streets, ducked in the town pond, and submitted to other indignities. Nearly one hundred took the measles, and several died. Colonel Aaron Burr, then a young aspiring lawyer, advocated the suit of the peddler, and under his powerful presentation the jury rendered a verdict of one thousand dollars damages against the young men. Before the close of the war the men who robbed him in Connecticut were captured in Brookhaven, Long Island, and some of his effects recovered. One of the party was hanged and the others were severely punished.

uated this Fall. The vessels belonging to private people sailed this day, and are to stop at Huntington to join the wood Fleet, and proceed from there immediately. From this circumstance I think it will not be evacuated. It is now said that the first division of Troops are to re-embark immediately, and it's generally believed that they are destined for Georgia. The last accounts from the West Indies say that Byron was at Barbadoes about a month ago. There positively is a letter from his Secretary to a gentleman in this place dated the first of Sept: which says that Byron was going home and that the Fleet was taking in water, and preparing with all expedition to go down to Jamaica, expecting that D'Estaing had gone against it. A vessel from Tortula which left it the 10th. Septr, the Capt of which says that it was reported there, and generally believed that D'Estaing had come to this Continent. — He likewise says that the English trade in the West Indies, is almost ruined by the number of French & Spanish Cruisers. Tortula has already been plundered, and it's expected that all the rest of the English Islands will share the same fate in the course of the winter. The Spaniards, he says, are even fitting out privateers at St. Thomas' & St. Croix. — Some say that Pensicola is invaded by the Spaniards. Accounts from England, via Rhode Island, as late as the 10th of August, say that there has been no engagement between the French and English Fleets. — No late accounts from Georgia; Some begin to fear that all is not well there. — A considerable number of Troops are on the West end of Long-Island — The 17th Dragoons at Heamstead — The mounted Legion of Queens Rangers at Jericho, and the Foot belonging to the Legion are at Oyster Bay. No arrivals of any consequence since my last, except those mentioned. The Spirits of the Tory's Flags much, but still some flatter themselves that there is yet a probability of England's rising superior to all her enemies. There does not appear the least prospect of this place being evacuated this fall. Tho' I believe thay would be glad to have them at home, as from the best accounts they are in a very critical situation — if we were only to judge from Sir Joseph York's memorial presented to their High Mightinesses, they are low enough.

'Large Magazines of Hay is already collected, and more collecting. The expense of transporting letters has already amounted to the

money sent; * I am therefore under the necessity of requesting that you will send me 20 Guineas by next conveyance.

'I am, Yours, &c.

'SAML. CULPER, JUN.'

(14) *Culper answers Bolton's eighteenth letter.*

'No. 25 *October 26th*, 1779.

'*Sir:* Your No. 18 with the enclosed came to hand, and was immediately forwarded to 723. And the inclosed blanks are his returns, which hope may be satisfactory at this conjuncture. I have again heard Count D'Estaing with his whole fleet are in Delaware Bay. This Glorious assistance together with the dejection of our Enemies, bids fair for our delivery, the pleasing hopes of which hath almost transported all our friends. But here much may be done toward our destruction within the space of a week, and to the great advantage of the enemy, to prevent which requires your immediate operations. From the effect of that Infernal Tryon's expedition into this county last year and branding a number of cattle that he left behind, last week a demand for 198 was made, not one quarter of that number was ever marked; and about 30 head was drove up but are not satisfied, and insist upon the whole number, and are now at Smith Town with carts from Lloyd's Neck and a number of wagons are hourly expected with a number of Troops at that place, for hay. They have nearly collected all the forage in Queens County and carrying it to Brooklyn; in one word, every preparation is a making for their defence — I hope you will not forget to grant us assistance as soon as possible. Your letter to Mr. C——r, Junr. was instantly forwarded, forgot to mention

* 'The expenses already amount to the money sent.' All are familiar with the difficulties Washington had in obtaining money. However, he realized the importance of the Secret Service work and when they asked for it usually supplied small amounts. Woodhull seems to have feared Townsend would attribute this to lack of appreciation, and when sums came, forwarded all to Townsend, retaining nothing for himself. Townsend correctly considered himself an agent of General Washington, and expected him to meet the obligations it became necessary to incur, just as the General insisted upon being furnished promptly with sufficient to meet his own expenses. Like Washington, also, neither of the Culpers received money as a reward or hire for their personal services, and like him they were obliged to draw upon their personal funds. It may be roughly estimated that both men spent as much again as Washington sent them.

it in my last, then being in such haste, as I had not time before dark and 725 I expected was a waiting. I received 20 Guineas from 725 which I sent to 723. I have nothing more to say — and may God grant us Success. And am

'Your very Humble Servt.,

'SAMUEL CULPER.'

(15) *Big guns at Battery.*

'NEW YORK, *October 29th*, 1779

'*Sir.* I have made inquiry concerning the quantity of provisions on this Island, and am well convinced there is sufficient to last this Garrison 6 months. Several vessels have not discharged. The packet arrived the 23d Inst. The accounts by her are very alarming to the Tories. They are now convinced that the English fleet dare not engage the united fleets of France and Spain. The Ardent is taken, and some say that they chased the English fleet into Portsmouth — This is certain that they lay off there several days, which caused the greatest consternation, as they expected to be invaded. The troops from Stoney and Verplanks points got down on Sunday evening. The troops which I mentioned to have embarked sails for Halifax this day with all the heavy ships of war except the Europa. The Daphne Frigate with Sir George Collin and Col. Stewart sails at the same time for England. Another Fort is erecting near Harrison's Brewery on the banks of the North River. That on Long Island will not be completed in some time. The Battery will be completed in a few days. Eighteen 24 pounders are now mounted. We have no late accounts from Georgia but it is generally believed that the Garrison there is taken. The fleet with the garrison from Rhode Island arrived the 27th, Inst. The Rainbow arrived at Sandy Hook from Halifax the same day. The enemy are daily collecting forage and have lately been about Oyster Bay and took all the hay in that quarter, notwithstanding the Legion quartered there. From this they mean to contract their lines very soon. No prospect of any speedy movement. The transports which I intimated are taking in Water and Ballast was for the use of the ships at Sandy Hook. The pilots say that it is now very difficult to bring a vessel in, owing to the hulks which were lately sunk there. A fleet of Victuallers

were to sail from Cork the latter part of September. A fleet of Store ships and Merchantmen were to sail from Spithead at the same time. I shall want some more of the Stain immediately as I am now quite out.

'I am Yrs, &c.

'SAML. CULPER, JUNR.'

(16) *Woodhull meets British Foot and Horse.*

'No. 28 427 eg 1779

'*Sir.* Your No. 20 & 21 came to hand pressing an immediate answer to sundry questions. It not being then in my power to send a person, to make the necessary inquiry, and the next appointment very short, and dispatches waiting, thought it best to order his return. Accordingly on the 7th sent a person, who visited every quarter between this and Heampstead Harbour, and on the 9th returned to me, and reported: No piles of wood on any Necks or Shores. As soon as it is cut it is put on board and carried to New York. Lord Cathcart Legion are stationed at Jericho and Oyster Bay. In Huntington and Lloyd's Neck are Coll. Ludlow's, Gov. Brown's, Coll. Fanning's Regiments. New Levies, 43 of foot 17 Dragoons, one Regt. of Hessians, all commanded by Genl. Leland if I do not mistake his name. However I am sure it is similar to such a name, and are collecting large magazines of wood and Forage near the house of Nathl. Williams — The whole number is computed to be sixteen hundred men. — On the 10 day was to see C. Jur. at a house he appointed twelve miles west from here, and set out with all my letters to meet him, and just before I arrived at the appointed place I suddenly met a foraging party of 40 Horse and 200 foot and about a hundred wagons. Was much surprised but after answering a few questions passed them unmolested. This party were draughts from the 17, 43, & Coll. Burch of the 17th. But to my great mortification Culper Jur. did not come that day. I waited all the next, and sent a person westward to several houses where I thought likely to find him, but could hear nothing of him. I am much concerned, fear some accident hath befallen him, but yet wish to entertain a favorable thought that he may be sick.

'The wagons went from Smith Town yesterday, loaded, but am in-

formed the Troops all stayed behind waiting their return. We have 20 Horse and 4 foot bilited about in houses, but no wagons have loaded here yet, they are exceedingly afraid and keep a very strict guard at the foot of Seaton's Neck. Coll. Floyd, E. Jones, above the Mill, J. Thompson's, P. Lions, John Bayles is Head Quarters Main guard in Kelly's House. They are not expected to stay here more than 10 days, some say not longer than a week. It will be precarious to attack them, they may be reinforced in one day's time. They are continually reconnoitering the shores and the weather is very uncertain. I am told the New York Paper saith Admrl. Parker hath taken 5 ships of the line from the French. I think something is the matter or they must have been here before now. I give over all hope of their coming to our relief this winter, and it is a killing thought to me. We shall see more distress this winter than ever since the war began. The inhabitants of this Island at present live a miserable life, which you may readily judge when having the refuse of three kingdoms and thirteen States amongst them. Plundering and rapine increaseth at no small rate. I am tired of this business, it gives me a deal of trouble, especially when disappointments happen. Could not consent to be any longer an assistant if I was not almost an Enthusiast for our success. — I am perfectly acquainted with a full year's anxiety, which no one can scarcely have an idea of but those that experience, and not long since there was not the breadth of your finger betwixt me and death — but so long as I reside here my faithful endeavours shall never be wanting. 725 loudly complains of his fatigue and declares he will not come so often. Should the enemy be stationed here this winter it will be very dangerous for him to come. You say you will take all the pains possible to secure Coll. Floyd and Mr. Seaton's goods. I hope they may be saved and the public get the benefit. I have no love for Coll. Floyd nor for no Tory under Heaven, but in my present situation am obliged to cultivate his friendship, and for that reason dare not mention to him what you purposed. I do not doubt he would be glad to hear it and perhaps keep it entirely secret for his own interest, but yet he would view me with an Evil Eye. I have not as yet heard of 725 arrival but as the weather is now favorable expect him this night, and shall expect his return on the 20th Instant, when shall hope to be ready

for him, and shall if no accident hath befallen C. Jur. hope to see him soon. And in the interim remain your most obt. H. Servt.

'SAML. CULLPER.' *

(17) *British counterfeiting money.*

'No. 14 NEW YORK, *27th Nov.* 1779.

'*Sir.* It is now said by the most knowing ones that a considerable part of the Army is to go to Georgia as soon as it is known that D'Estaing has left the Coast, and some think that several Regiments will be sent to the West Indies. Charlestown is fixed on as the grand object this campaign and winter.

'The spirits of the Tory's is amazingly elated with the reports of the Army in Georgia. It has been repeated some time past that Parker has taken seven sail of French Men of War in the West Indies, and on Friday an account was brought by a Cartel from Boston that there had been an engagement between the grand Fleets in the Channel, in which the combined fleets of France and Spain were defeated with the loss of. . ships sunk and taken. The former account is now thought premature, and the latter improbable, as it is said to have happened on the 2d. of September and the packet left Falmouth the 7th, and brings no such account.

'The Tories are extremely anxious for the fate of the British Fleet. They think that the success of the contest depends entirely on it. They have hopes that England will be able to form some alliance this winter, which will enable them to carry on the War here another campaign, which they flatter themselves will end in their favour, as they think America will not be able to keep an Army together another campaign. Truth reasons that their currency will be entirely depreciated, and that there will not be provision in the country to supply an Army another campaign. That of the currency I am afraid will prove true, as they are indefatigable in increasing the quantity of it. Several reams of the paper made for the last emission struck by Congress have been procured from Philadelphia. I have taken much pains to find out some of those concerned, but could not accomplish it. But that there is such paper brought in you may depend on as a fact. A large ship

* *Cullper* instead of *Culper* it is written in Woodhull's handwriting.

was sent into the Hook yesterday but it is not known where she is from. The Men of War at the Hook have taken in water for several months and on Friday the Admiral went down with all his baggage. A Fleet for Cork and a number of vessels for England will sail in a few days, some of which are loaded with valuable cargoes. However, some think that they will not sail till D'Estaing has left the Coast, or till there is some arrival from England. Privateering is now almost over, not more than six now out and few fitting. There has not any prizes of value arrived for some time past.

'I am, Your humble Servt.

'SAML. CULPER, JUNR.'

(18) *Culper would kill Simcoe.*

'No. 30 729 *December* 12, 1779.

'*Sir:* Inclosed you have a blank just come to hand from C. Junr., which I conclude contains some important intelligence, and as this is the appointed night, and very good hope it will soon reach your hands. On Monday last the Foraging Party left us, after collecting the Forage in general as far Eastward as this township extends, some from South Hold and South Hampton. The Forage collected in this county is all carried to Huntington; and are as fast as possible sending it to N. York. As soon as they get it all from that place the enemy will most certainly leave there, except the Garrison on Lloyd's Neck. We are not a little comforted after our distress, with the pleasing hope that the Enemy will not trouble us any farther this winter, and glad our correspondence will not be interrepted or subject to greater danger than usual. The said misfortune attending our endeavours to the Southward hath greatly lifted up our Enemies and dejected our friends, and deeply affected me and allmost ready to conclude that the day of our deliverance is farther distant than we ever glanced a thought, and that all the Carolinas will fall into their hands, as is most certain a large embarcation destined for Charles Town is about to take place, and believe Clinton will go himself. But yet hope such measures will be adopted that they may be spaird and protected. Culper Junior is entirely out of the Counterpart, and unable to read any future blanks that may come. Don't fail to forward it next opportunity, and we can-

not get any person to run the risk written with common ink. C. Jur. is to be with me on the 25th, hope if the weather is favorable you will incline to come as we greatly desire to see you. We would gladly if possible meet you half way. I have the pleasure to inform you my fears are much abated since the troops have been with us. Their approach was like death to me. Did not know wether to stand or fall. Had they been the Queens Rangers or legion should have been with you before now. Were I now in the State of New Jersey without fear of Law or Gospel would certainly 344 Gqm. Ucngqi for his usage to me. I have nothing further to say at present, and am

'Yours sincerely,

'SAML. CULPER.'

(19) *British sail for Charleston.*

'No. 17. 729 *Dec. 27th*, 1779.

'*Sir*, In my last I informed you that a considerable number of the enemy were under orders for Embarkation. The number does not exceed seven thousand. I have now to inform you that they have all Embarked, and part of the Transports fell down to the Hook a few days ago. They were to sail the 26th Inst. under Convoy of the Russel, Robust, Europa, Defiance, Raisonable, Roebuck, Renown, Romulus & Perseus. Genl. Clinton goes in the Romulus. The time that it will necessarily take for this to get to hand makes it almost useless to inform you that they are positively going to Charlestown. Governor Martin with a considerable number of North Carolina Refugees, and all the Officers who have been on furloe from Georgia, goes with the expedition. Five vessels are loaded with ordnance stores, and they have taken fifty chests of Arms for the purpose of arming the Tory's and Negroes. It is said that they are to act on a very different plan from what they formerly have, i.e. to settle the Country as they Conquer it, by securing all those whom they may suppose dangerous; and to give the most noted Tory's a considerable command. It is said that Clinton will go home immediately after taking possession of Charlestown, and leave the command to Lord Cornwallis. The most sanguine of the Tory's flatter themselves that the British army will be in possession of both the Carolinas May next. I sincerely hope that such

measures will be taken as may disappoint their expectations, even to the taking of Charlestown. If the Garrison destin'd to defend it will have a Retrospect to Georgia, and immitate them I think they may hold it. Clinton will make a vigorous push for it, for I believe he thinks that it is necessary to do something to distinguish himself before he returns to England.

'The Garrison at New-York is left under the command of Tryon & Knyphausen. It is now entirely out of wood, and can get none but what they bring from a considerable distance by land. A considerable number of teams are ordered from Queens County to Brooklyn Ferry, each to carry a load of wood, and to continue there for six days to cart wood from the nearest wood land for the use of the Army. If the creeks continue shut any time, the inhabitants will be greatly distressed for the want of fuel. The Markets are well supply'd with fresh provisions of every kind, and will continue so while there is any cattle in Connecticut & New Jersey. A considerable number of cattle and other provisions is daily brought over from Connecticut to the East end of Long Island, and from thence conveyed to New York; and there has ever been regular supplies from Shrewsbury, Middletown, and every other part of East Jersey. It is almost needless to mention Kings Bridge, for it has been, and ever will be a practice to get supplies in that way.

'No arrivals since my last, and none from Europe since the September Packet. The Fleet for Europe, consisting of near one hundred sail, sailed from Sandy Hook the 23d Inst. under convoy of the Solebay & Lioness, Frigates.

'The expense of conveying letters obliges me to request that you will send me Twenty Guineas pr. next conveyance. I am now entirely out of the Counterpart of the Strain.

'I am, Yours, &c &c.

'Saml. Culper, Jun.'

(20) *Prison ship set on fire.*

'729 374 eg 1780.

'724 returned from 727 last night with a blank for 711 which I have inclosed and forwarded, together with the Newspapers. The papers

declare the willfull burning of the Prison Ship by one Woodberry of Connecticut, on the 5th inst. No account of Sir H. Clinton yet. Verbal accounts sent me from a person thats had the perusal of the English papers say the debates run much higher than ever, some having fought duels. Lord Charles Gorden declared in the Parliment he had in Scotland 150 thousand men ready to take vengeance on the present ministry. Hope it may be true.

'SAML. CULPER.'

(21) *Code words here freely used.*

'729 29 fn 1780.

'*Sir.* I have now to acknowledge the receipt of yours of the ff Instant — and one of an earlier date, as also eu 230. The 121 I 691 my last before had time to 156 it. Was taken very cmm with the 73 151, but am now 60, though very 349. My 151 hath put it out of my power to make any 322 about the 178 in these 476. Genl. 712 hath returned to 727 some 121 ago. The en Regt. D. is in 729. ei Companies of 309 are at Smith Town. Queens Rangers and Fannings Regts. are yet East of here, where know not. The whole number is about 1500. It appears probable they will continue in these parts some time. Their wanton waste of the necessities of life (which will occasion people to perish for want of subsistance unless can be procured elsewhere) hath given rise to a prevailing opinion that this is the last visit we shall ever have from them, and that they will leave 727 soon. I was told so when at 727, but could see nothing that looked like it. There's the same accounts in 727 from 745 as mentioned in your 356. Hope the flame begun may increase, and fill with horror all those cursed destroyers of mankind. The 585 keep up a constant communication with your courts, and carries large sums of counterfeit paper currency of every emission and puts it into the hands of Tory's for to pay their taxes with. This I do assure from undoubted authority is their practice. I shall at a more convenient time write you further on the subject of treachery, and some discoveries that I hope soon to make. Inclosed you have a blank from C. Jur. just come to hand, and yours enclosed to him shall be delivered into his hands on Wednesday next. On the f 616 let 725 cross again. In the interim am yours sincerl.

'SAML. CULPER.'

(22) *Major Tallmadge writes to General Washington.*

'Bedford, *Aug.* 28*th*, 1780.

'*Sir.* I have the Honor to enclose a letter from C. Junr., & one from Lt. B. .r which have just come to hand. I have also recd. a letter from C. . Junr. of which the following is an extract:

'N. Y. *Aug.* 23*d*, 1780.

'C. Senr. was in Town & wrote you by the last conveyance. The present offers nothing material. Clinton seems now preparing to act on the defensive. He is fortifying on L. I. opposite Frog's Point, the Heights of Harlem, & the Island eastward of Hellgate. However some of our most knowing politicians say that Rhode Island is still the object, & that he is only waiting the arrival of three Regts that are expected from Carolina, and some Hanoverian Troops that are expected some time in September, and that Arbuthnot is to keep off N. Port till that time. Others think that this garrison will be put in the best state of defence & that Arbuthnot will go to the West Indies.

'A fleet of Transports, Victuallers, & some private vessels under convoy of the Renown, will sail for England in a few days. The 22d, 76th, Robinsons, and two Hessian Regts. do duty in Town. Forty two pieces of Cannon are mounted on the Battery.

'C. Senr. will furnish you with the situation of the troops on Long Island.

'I was obliged to decypher C. . Junr. letter, as I was convinced it referred to the future mode of our correspondence. After his next arrives, I hope to have no further occasion to decypher his letters, as I hope by that time our plans will be finished. After sending several times across the Sound to open a new communication with Culper Junior, without success, I have finally referred the whole matter to him, who I expect will appoint such place and pick on such persons for his confidential friends, as will best answer our purpose, and inform me thereof.

'Lt. B. .r informs of several boats with Continental Crews, being along the Sound, which were appointed by Genl. Officers. Possibly Major Humpreys knows more about this matter. If they are not wanted on their present duty, one of them would be of very great

service to Lt. B. .r. I have the Honor to be, with great regard, Your Excellency's most Obedt. Hbl. Sert.

'Benj. Tallmadge.'

(23) *Genealogy.*

Samuel Townsend and his wife Sarah, parents of Robert Townsend, *alias* Culper Junior, had eight children: Solomon, Samuel, Robert, William David, Audrey, Sarah, and Phebe. Only the descendants of his son Solomon have survived to the present day.

Solomon,* son of Samuel and brother of Robert Townsend, also had eight children, namely, Hannah, Anne, Mary, Phebe, Samuel, Jacob, Peter, and Solomon.

Hannah, niece of Robert Townsend and daughter of Solomon, married Isaiah Townsend, of Albany. When he died, February 17, 1838, the merchants met and resolved to close all the stores and to attend his funeral. She died November 1, 1854. Her children were Isaiah, Anna, Robert, Franklin, who was Mayor of Albany in 1850–51, Howard, Frederick, and Mary. Isaiah married Harriet Townsend, Anna married Henry H. Martin, Robert married Harriet Monroe, Franklin married Anna King, Howard married Justina Van Rensselaer, Frederick married Sarah Rathbone, Mary married General William H. Walker.

Anna, niece of Robert Townsend and daughter of Solomon, married Effingham Lawrence, one-time first judge of the County of Queens. He was a son of Phebe Townsend, of Orange County, who in 1764 married Joseph Lawrence. His grandfather, Richard Lawrence, born in 1691, married Hannah Bowne, daughter of Samuel Bowne, and granddaughter of John Bowne, of Flushing, and his great-grandfather was Joseph Lawrence, who in 1690 married Mary Townley and in-

* A stone at the grave of Solomon Townsend, brother of Robert, is inscribed: 'In Memory of Solomon Townsend, Member of the State Legislature from the City of New York, who departed this life on the 27th March, 1811, during the Session, aged 64 years 5 months and 2 days. The remains were transferred from Albany to this place Dec. 9th 1848.'

herited from his mother a large estate at Flushing and Little Neck. His great-great-grandfather was William Lawrence, who married Elizabeth, daughter of Richard 'Bull' Smith, patentee of Smithtown. The town of Elizabeth, New Jersey, was so named in honor of this lady. Anna (Townsend) Lawrence had eight children: Townsend, Lydia, Henry, William, Effingham, Robert, Mary, and Edward. She died October 11, 1845.

Mary, niece of Robert Townsend and daughter of Solomon, married Edward Holland Nicoll, son of Henry and Elizabeth (Woodhull) Nicoll, and grandson of General Nathaniel Woodhull. She was born in 1789 and died in 1849. Her children were: Henry, born October 23, 1812, and died November 28, 1879; he married Anna Townsend Thorne, daughter of James and Phebe (Townsend) Thorne; Solomon Townsend Nicoll, born November 13, 1813, and died December 23, 1865; Edward Holland Nicoll, born December 25, 1815, died January 26, 1820. Solomon Townsend Nicoll, above, married Charlotte, daughter of Samuel Benjamin Nicoll, of Shelter Island. Their children were Annie, DeLancey, Benjamin, Mary Townsend, Edward Holland, and Charlotte. DeLancey Nicoll above, the well-known lawyer of New York City, is therefore a grandson of Robert Townsend's niece.

Phebe, niece of Robert Townsend and daughter of Solomon, married James Thorne, of Albany. They had children: Sarah, Anna, Robert, Mary, Edward, John, James, and Martha.

Samuel and *Jacob* died unmarried.

Peter S. Townsend, nephew of Robert Townsend and son of Solomon, died March 26, 1849. His activities would fill a volume and are worthy of careful preservation.

Solomon, nephew of Robert Townsend and son of Solomon, was born October 8, 1805, and died April 2, 1880. He resided at 'Raynham Hall,' Oyster Bay, married Helene, daughter of Dr. Charles Townsend, of Albany, and had six children: Solomon, Charles, Robert, Maurice, Edward, and Maria.

(25) *S. Culper urges Howell's imprisonment.*

'729 462 ei 1780

'*Sir.* Your favour of the k Instant hath been duly received, and observe the contents. I am pleased with your intention of apprehending Aiqlai Bqyim. Pray be active and vigilent to secure our Country. No man's character stands in better light with the Enemy and hath been a particular friend of Tryon's. And whilst resided at his native town held a constant correspondence with Tryon & Coll. Burch. He never faild in his request for favors when asked for. Could obtain permission for five hundred pounds worth of goods at one time, when others could not for fifty. You may rest assured that B. & J. Nwcluqp are his bosom friends and know his heart. Not long since, B. Nwcluqp told me he was very uneasy about him. Said he had been expected back for some time, asked me if I had not heard nothing about him and desired if possible to enquire after him. Said this was the second time he had been out in the service of Government and was afraid he would be found out. He is largely in debt at 727 and his departure appeared like one fleeing for refuge but it was all to cloak his villany. Arnolds affair hath now become an old story, I am sorry for the death of Major Andre but better so than to lose the post. He was seeking your ruin. C. Junr. is now with me and shall refer you to his letter for intelligence. I was in hopes you might have come and seen him. I have enclosed you receipt for fifteen Guineas. The other five pieces were too light and could not be of any service to me, two of which were Quarter Joes, and have sent them back again.

'S. Culper.'

(26) *Bad money is returned to Washington.*

'Pine Bridge, *Oct. 17th*, '80

'*Sir.* I have this moment recd. the enclosed from the C. .s. As circumstances have since turned out I wish I had met C. Junr. as mentioned in my last to Your Excellency.

'C. has returned me five of the Guineas which I recd. of your Excellency at Tappan, for reasons which are mentioned in his enclosed letter. I will forward them to Hd. Qrs. or otherwise dispose of them as I may be directed.

'With respect to the person mentioned in C. Senior's letter, I really believe he is a very dangerous man among us, and from the charges adduced against him by C. should suppose he ought to be apprehended. I am informed he has lately been to Rhode Island; his business may be guessed at. The person mentioned in C. Senior's letter as friends to Aiqlai Bqyim are the brothers of the person who had a permit from Genl. Parsons to cross with Lt. Brewster, but has since been prohibited agreeable to your Excellency's order through me. I am very confident Genl. Parsons was much deceived in the man. . . .

'BENJ. TALLMADGE.'

(27) *Woodhull congratulates Tallmadge.*

'729 427 fo 1780

'*Dear Sir.* I congratulate you on your success within the bounds of 729. The burning the forage is agreeable to me and must hurt the enemy much. It cannot be replaced and was what I advised 725 to do some time ago but was opposed by a person of some consequence in this place and so gave up the matter. In order to continue your success and endeavours I rode yesterday above sixty miles, and now can inform you that the 17th Dragoons at Hemstead, about 200 grenadiers at Newtown, 1000 Hessians at Flushing. Some few at Jamaica, 900 Yeagers and Anspach Germans cantoned from Herrick along the north side of Hempstead Plains and some to Oyster Bay. About sixty occupies the fort at the last mentioned place, about 200 consisting of Ludloes. A Major Coldens Volunteers at Lloyd's Neck. There about 50 Refugees at and about Tredles farme near Smiths Town possess a small fort, two field pieces, but are under no command each man thinks himself equal to their Capt. Luke, and are disagreeing continually. Good judges say they can be taken at any time with ease and is thought they will leave that quarter soon, if they should not be attacked. The woods afford a cover almost to their works. Last week the enemy lost a Frigate going through Helgate bound to the fleet at this east end, and sunk immediately. To serve you I purpose if possible to ride the circuit of these lines and return on the 20th day of December, at which time let 725 cross again. Perhaps you may think the time long but cannot well be sooner. If you should think proper to

send him about the 10th it will be agreeable and will write you all I can. Perhaps may hear something of importance, or you may wish to give me some instructions which is ever agreeable. I have had but a few minutes to write and please excuse the imperfections you may discover. The intelligence is the best concerning the enemy and am

'Yours Sincerely,

'SAML. CULPER.'

(28) *Townsend back in New York.*

'729 374 the eo 1781.

'*Sir.* Your several favours of the fo of 215 and of the ee Instant have been received and observe the contents. I have but little to communicate at this time. Genl. Phillips hath embarked some days ago with all the infantry, the Seventy-Six Regiment and two German Regiments. The whole said to amount to sixteen hundred men, generally believed are bound to the assistance of Arnold. They had not sailed last Thursday and am of opinion they will not go. They certainly have not a sufficient convoy. A few days past a small boat arrived from Arnold in forty eight hours but nothing could be learned from her. There's nothing from any other quarter, save Britain declaring war against the United States of Holland and their taking St. Estutias and one hundred and sixty sail of ships. See the papers inclosed. The enemy are very low on the same account. I think they must make peace shortly. The Memorial of Prussia mentioned in the News Paper is not thought to be genuine here. C. Jur. is again in 727 and entering into business as heretofore and you may soon I hope receive his dispatches. And remain your very Humbl. Servt.

'SAML CULPER.'

(29) *Tallmadge's request to be first to officially enter New York.*

'GREENFIELD, *March 31st*, 1783.

'*Sir.* I had the honor to write Your Excellency on the 29th inst. on which day I crossed to Long Island as then proposed, from whence I have just returned. From every enquiry & a variety of information, it appears to be reduced to a certainty that a general peace has been concluded on in Europe, an authenticated account of which great event I hope Your Excellency has received before this time.

'I saw several of my old correspondents from New York, who inform that although official information respecting a Peace had not yet reached N. Y. yet preparations were making for the Garrison to be ready to leave that place. They inform that a considerable number of the Loyalists are about setting off for Nova Scotia; that the foreign troops are preparing to embark as they are to sail first if there should not be transports enough to remove the whole & in that case the British Troops will remove out Staten Island. They are in expectation of Transports from Europe, as they have only about eighty for that service at New York.

'From the present auspicious appearance of our public affairs and from a persuasion that the American Troops will soon be in possession of New York, I have to request that Your Excellency would be pleased to suffer me, with my detachment, to be among the first who may go into the City. I have many reasons for making this early request but the principal argument which I would offer, and which I am conscious will have due weight in Your Excellency's breast, is that particular attention may be paid to certain Characters in New York, who have served us very essentially, and who may other ways be treated amiss. It is a favor which they will by all means expect, and some of them will not wish to have the nature of their services divulged....

'Benj. Tallmadge.'

WOODHULL GENEALOGY

If upon this page were to be recorded even in the briefest manner, the twenty-eight generations of the Woodhull family preserved by genealogists, it might weary the most attentive reader. Suffice it to note that the castle occupied by the first ancestor was located at Wahull, now Woodhull, in Bedford, England. It was a portion of the acreage distributed by William the Conqueror among his followers, another parcel being in Northamptonshire, where at Thenford was born in 1620, Richard Woodhull,* founder of the family in the New World. He was married in England before crossing the Atlantic in 1648. Having been a warm friend of Oliver Cromwell he deemed it unwise to try to live under the restricted monarchy of Charles II. His first property on Long Island consisted of 10800 acres in the town of Brookhaven, which he purchased in 1656. The section selected for his home

* A granite stone in the Presbyterian Church yard at Setauket, L.I., erected by John Alpheus Woodhull, reads:

WOODHULL

Sequor nec Inferior
Richard
Born in Thenford, Eng. 1620
Settled in Setauket, L. I., 1656
Died Oct. 17, 1690
Every inch a Nobleman.

RICHARD. 2ND
Born 1649 Died 1699.
A genuine Son of his Father

The tombs of these men,
Destroyed by British Soldiers
in 1777,
A Reverent son restores
in 1901.

was at Setauket Harbor, then called Ashford or Cromwell's Bay. Here Abraham Woodhull † his great-great-grandson, whom we now discover was Culper Senior of the American Revolution, was born, and here also Abraham Woodhull's great-great-grandchildren were born and the surviving members of his family are living to-day. The chart included herewith emphasizes the direct descent of Culper Senior and also helps to define the relationship of other members mentioned in the text.

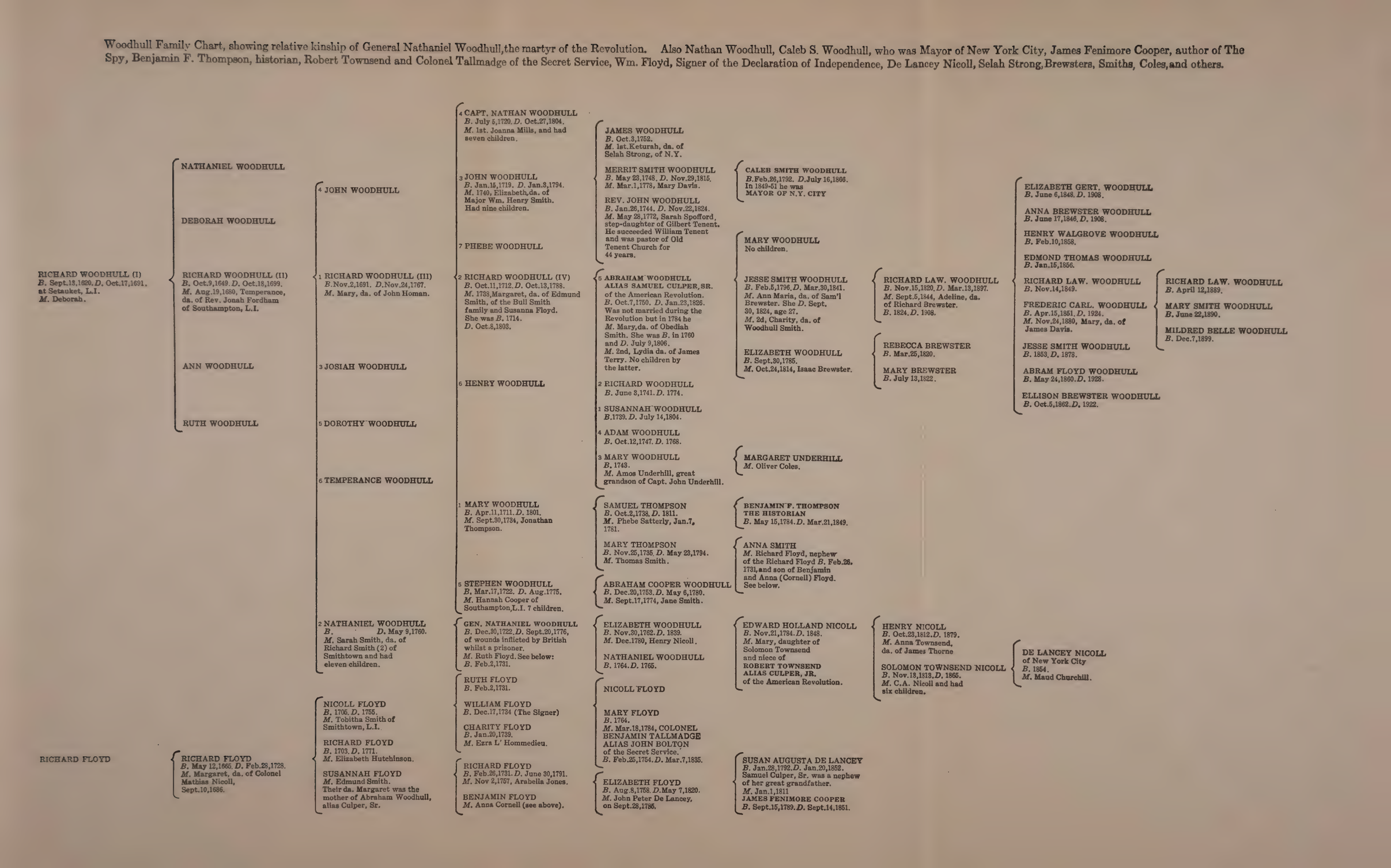
† Over the grave of Abraham Woodhull in the Presbyterian Church yard at Setauket is a slab reading:

IN MEMORY OF

ABRAHAM WOODHULL

who died Jan. 23, 1826, in the 76. year of his age.

Woodhull Family Chart, showing relative kinship of General Nathaniel Woodhull, the martyr of the Revolution. Also Nathan Woodhull, Caleb S. Woodhull, who was Mayor of New York City, James Fenimore Cooper, author of The Spy, Benjamin F. Thompson, historian, Robert Townsend and Colonel Tallmadge of the Secret Service, Wm. Floyd, Signer of the Declaration of Independence, De Lancey Nicoll, Selah Strong, Brewsters, Smiths, Coles, and others.


RICHARD WOODHULL (I)
B. Sept.13,1620. D. Oct.17,1691.
at Setauket, L.I.
M. Deborah.
NATHANIEL WOODHULL
DEBORAH WOODHULL
RICHARD WOODHULL (II)
B. Oct.9,1649. D. Oct.18,1699.
M. Aug.19,1680, Temperance, da. of Rev. Jonah Fordham of Southampton, L.I.
ANN WOODHULL
RUTH WOODHULL
4 JOHN WOODHULL
1 RICHARD WOODHULL (III)
B. Nov.2,1691. D. Nov.24,1767.
M. Mary, da. of John Homan.
3 JOSIAH WOODHULL
5 DOROTHY WOODHULL
6 TEMPERANCE WOODHULL
2 NATHANIEL WOODHULL
B. D. May 9,1760.
M. Sarah Smith, da. of Richard Smith (2) of Smithtown and had eleven children.
NICOLL FLOYD
B. 1706. D. 1755.
M. Tobitha Smith of Smithtown, L.I.
RICHARD FLOYD
B. 1703. D. 1771.
M. Elizabeth Hutchinson.
SUSANNAH FLOYD
M. Edmund Smith.
Their da. Margaret was the mother of Abraham Woodhull, alias Culper, Sr.
RICHARD FLOYD
B. May 12,1665. D. Feb.28,1728.
M. Margaret, da. of Colonel Mathias Nicoll, Sept.10,1686.
4 CAPT. NATHAN WOODHULL
B. July 5,1720. D. Oct.27,1804.
M. 1st. Joanna Mills, and had seven children.
3 JOHN WOODHULL
B. Jan.15,1719. D. Jan.3,1794.
M. 1740, Elizabeth, da. of Major Wm. Henry Smith.
Had nine children.
7 PHEBE WOODHULL
2 RICHARD WOODHULL (IV)
B. Oct.11,1712. D. Oct.13,1788.
M. 1733, Margaret, da. of Edmund Smith, of the Bull Smith family and Susanna Floyd.
She was B. 1714.
D. Oct.8,1803.
6 HENRY WOODHULL
1 MARY WOODHULL
B. Apr.11,1711. D. 1801.
M. Sept.30,1734, Jonathan Thompson.
5 STEPHEN WOODHULL
B. Mar.17,1722. D. Aug.1775.
M. Hannah Cooper of Southampton, L.I. 7 children.
GEN. NATHANIEL WOODHULL
B. Dec.30,1722. D. Sept.20,1776, of wounds inflicted by British whilst a prisoner.
M. Ruth Floyd. See below:
B. Feb.2,1731.
RUTH FLOYD
B. Feb.2,1731.
WILLIAM FLOYD
B. Dec.17,1734 (The Signer)
CHARITY FLOYD
B. Jan.20,1739.
M. Ezra L' Hommedieu.
RICHARD FLOYD
B. Feb.26,1731. D. June 30,1791.
M. Nov 2,1757, Arabella Jones.
BENJAMIN FLOYD
M. Anna Cornell (see above).
JAMES WOODHULL
B. Oct.3,1752.
M. 1st. Keturah, da. of Selah Strong, of N.Y.
MERRIT SMITH WOODHULL
B. May 23,1748. D. Nov.29,1815.
M. Mar.1,1778, Mary Davis.
REV. JOHN WOODHULL
B. Jan.26,1744. D. Nov.22,1824.
M. May 28,1772, Sarah Spofford, step-daughter of Gilbert Tenent.
He succeeded William Tenent and was pastor of Old Tenent Church for 44 years.
5 ABRAHAM WOODHULL ALIAS SAMUEL CULPER, SR.
of the American Revolution.
B. Oct.7,1750. D. Jan.23,1826.
Was not married during the Revolution but in 1784 he
M. Mary, da. of Obediah Smith. She was B. in 1760 and D. July 9,1806.
M. 2nd, Lydia da. of James Terry. No children by the latter.
2 RICHARD WOODHULL
B. June 3,1741. D. 1774.
1 SUSANNAH WOODHULL
B. 1739. D. July 14,1804.
4 ADAM WOODHULL
B. Oct.12,1747. D. 1768.
3 MARY WOODHULL
B. 1743.
M. Amos Underhill, great grandson of Capt. John Underhill.
SAMUEL THOMPSON
B. Oct.2,1738. D. 1811.
M. Phebe Satterly, Jan.7, 1781.
MARY THOMPSON
B. Nov.25,1735. D. May 23,1794.
M. Thomas Smith.
ABRAHAM COOPER WOODHULL
B. Dec.20,1753. D. May 6,1780.
M. Sept.17,1774, Jane Smith.
ELIZABETH WOODHULL
B. Nov.30,1762. D. 1839.
M. Dec.1780, Henry Nicoll.
NATHANIEL WOODHULL
B. 1764. D. 1765.
NICOLL FLOYD
MARY FLOYD
B. 1764.
M. Mar.18,1784, COLONEL BENJAMIN TALLMADGE ALIAS JOHN BOLTON
of the Secret Service.
B. Feb.25,1754. D. Mar.7,1835.
ELIZABETH FLOYD
B. Aug.8,1758. D. May 7,1820.
M. John Peter De Lancey, on Sept.28,1786.
CALEB SMITH WOODHULL
B. Feb.26,1792. D. July 16,1866.
In 1849-51 he was MAYOR OF N.Y. CITY
MARY WOODHULL
No children.
JESSE SMITH WOODHULL
B. Feb.5,1796. D. Mar.30,1841.
M. Ann Maria, da. of Sam'l Brewster. She D. Sept. 30, 1824, age 27.
M. 2d, Charity, da. of Woodhull Smith.
ELIZABETH WOODHULL
B. Sept.30,1785.
M. Oct.24,1814, Isaac Brewster.
MARGARET UNDERHILL
M. Oliver Coles.
BENJAMIN F. THOMPSON THE HISTORIAN
B. May 15,1784. D. Mar.21,1849.
ANNA SMITH
M. Richard Floyd, nephew of the Richard Floyd B. Feb.26, 1731, and son of Benjamin and Anna (Cornell) Floyd.
See below.
EDWARD HOLLAND NICOLL
B. Nov.21,1784. D. 1848.
M. Mary, daughter of Solomon Townsend and niece of ROBERT TOWNSEND ALIAS CULPER, JR.
of the American Revolution.
SUSAN AUGUSTA DE LANCEY
B. Jan.28,1792. D. Jan.20,1852.
Samuel Culper, Sr. was a nephew of her great grandfather.
M. Jan.1,1811
JAMES FENIMORE COOPER
B. Sept.15,1789. D. Sept.14,1851.
RICHARD LAW. WOODHULL
B. Nov.15,1820. D. Mar.13,1897.
M. Sept.5,1844, Adeline, da. of Richard Brewster.
B. 1824. D. 1908.
REBECCA BREWSTER
B. Mar.25,1820.
MARY BREWSTER
B. July 13,1822.
HENRY NICOLL
B. Oct.23,1812. D. 1879.
M. Anna Townsend, da. of James Thorne
SOLOMON TOWNSEND NICOLL
B. Nov.18,1813. D. 1865.
M. C.A. Nicoll and had six children.
DE LANCEY NICOLL
of New York City
B. 1854.
M. Maud Churchill.
ELIZABETH GERT. WOODHULL
B. June 6,1848. D. 1908.
ANNA BREWSTER WOODHULL
B. June 17,1846. D. 1908.
HENRY WALGROVE WOODHULL
B. Feb.10,1858.
EDMOND THOMAS WOODHULL
B. Jan.15,1856.
RICHARD LAW. WOODHULL
B. Nov.14,1849.
FREDERIC CARL. WOODHULL
B. Apr.15,1851. D. 1924.
M. Nov.24,1880, Mary, da. of James Davis.
JESSE SMITH WOODHULL
B. 1853. D. 1873.
ABRAM FLOYD WOODHULL
B. May 24,1860. D. 1928.
ELLISON BREWSTER WOODHULL
B. Oct.5,1862. D. 1922.
RICHARD LAW. WOODHULL
B. April 12,1889.
MARY SMITH WOODHULL
B. June 22,1890.
MILDRED BELLE WOODHULL
B. Dec.7,1899.

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